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new masses

VIRGINIA GARDNER

YOUR LANDLORD'S FAVORITE SENATOR

A. B. MAGIL

LA FOLLETTE AND THE COMMUNISTS

MARGARET SCHLAUCH

SEMANTICS: SCIENCE OR CURE-ALL?

APRIL 15, 1947

IN CANADA 20¢

15¢

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just a minute

READERS of NEW MASSES will recall that we printed (on May 28, 1946) Don West's introduction to his volume of poetry, *Clods of Southern Earth,* and several of the poems before the book was published. The book, which has sold well over 15,000 copies, is a ringing affirmation of the New South—the people's South. And because of that, and because of who Don West is, and what he represents, the author is under attack.

Don West, born and reared in Gilmer County, Georgia, teacher of English at Oglethorpe University, a leading Southern poet, and prominent foe of the Ku Klux Klan and all its evil works, made a radio speech over station WATL in Atlanta recently. He spoke of the attempt of "Human" Talmadge to seize power in Georgia. "We are witnessing no ordinary squabble of politicians," he said. "Hitler's speeches in 1932 put forth the same ideas against the Jews as the Talmadge-Roy Harris machine puts forth against the Negro people in Georgia. . . . Already we see the fruits of this attempted dictatorial seizure of power in the proposed white primary bill, a Nazi tactic to maintain power by those who illegally claim it."

Obviously these sentiments are bad medicine for the thugs who have much to say in Klan-ridden Georgia. The radio address was just one of the many activities of this persistent man who was rousing Georgia to the dangers that faced it. Clearly, he had to be stopped. They awaited their opportunity, and when West published *Clods of Southern Earth* they thought they had him. For in one of the poems he used the name Charles Lewallen, a name as common to the South as Jones or Smith is to other regions. It was therefore no trouble at all for the KKK, the Talmadge forces, *et al,* to dig up a stooge by that name who promptly entered a civil libel suit against West for $10,000 to assuage his hurt feelings. The section of the poem in question, "Harlan Coal Diggers—1934," containing the name C—— L——, goes as follows:

Sweet Land of Freedom . . . watch out for
Company thugs. . . . If you're a
Union man . . . if you are not a
Union man . . .
You ought to be. . . . Charles Lewallen shot
At night . . .
Thru the back. . . .
Charles' wife had nine kids. . . .

From a strictly legal angle the case is a travesty. If the "plaintiff" were right, no writer of fiction or poetry or reportage, in fact no writer at all, would ever be able to use names of any kind. There is even a Doakes in a telephone book somewhere. Novelists would have to call their characters Mr. X or Lady Umph. When one Mr. Andy Gump tried to enjoin the comic strip of that name from using his moniker, he could not summon up enough legal grounds to succeed. Legally, the Georgian Charles Lewallen would have to prove that he was a miner in 1934, that he had nine children, that he was shot in the back and that he was probably dead as a result. But as the miners recently learned, the law is what the judges say it is—and Georgia justice often does some strange things.

The reactionary gentry of Georgia are prosecuting Don West not because they are suddenly sensitive to the possible hurt feelings of one Charles Lewallen, but because West is a vigorous anti-fascist, a people's leader, a militant democrat. The president of Oglethorpe is being pressured into firing West. West himself had to discontinue his phone, because he was threatened day and night by anonymous voices speaking for his persecutors. It is obvious that the fight of Don West is our fight, the fight of every honest democrat who would like to see the forces of evil routed from our country.

Contemporary Writers, an organization of anti-fascist American writers, co-chaired by Erskine Caldwell and Howard Fast, has organized a Defend Don West Committee. This committee, located at Hotel Albert, 65 University Place, New York City, needs your support to win this battle.

WILL the reader who banks at the Hamilton National Bank in Washington, D. C. and who sent in a three-dollar check recently please get in touch with our Bookkeeping Department?

J. F.

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MEET SENATOR BRICKER:

LANDLORDS LOVE HIM

The GOP house-wreckers are raising the roof about Reds to conceal their moves to raise your rent.

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

IT IS difficult to imagine how any man could look more like a Senator than does the Senator from Ohio, John W. Bricker. Tall, with a thatch of silver hair, a ruddy complexion—a regular Warren G. Harding type in appearance, just meant for the rotogravure sections—he was a little overaweing as he sat behind his massive desk granting NEW MASSES an interview. That is, until the picture came to life and began emitting words. Not that it ever came to life completely: not once did a smile cross that august and solemn face. But it was not only that. It seems fair to assume that when a man speaks, certain thought processes are at work, and generally these are reflected in some play of features, a flash of eye, a smile, a frown. But not with the Senator. When he speaks, his thought processes do nothing to enhance the features. They remain the same, and the voice, a rather dull voice with a colloquial slur, goes on.

Perhaps I am being unfair to the Senator. Perhaps he simply did not warm to the idea of being interviewed by a NEW MASSES reporter. But it is a fact that until his speech of March 28 proposing to send the nomination of David Lilienthal as administrator of the Atomic Energy Commission back to the committee which had approved it with his lone dissent, Senator Bricker had been as silent as a clam on the floor. He had spoken only once before, and then briefly.

The day before I saw the Senator the Senate Banking and Currency Subcommittee of which he is a member had reported to the full committee, and the full committee had voted to report out a rent control bill. A so-called compromise bill, it is in fact a bill to decontrol rent, but it does omit the ten percent across-the-board increase in rent previously voted by the subcommittee and rejected by the full committee. According to the New York *Times* of April 1, Senator Bricker proposed that the ten percent increase be retained, but gained no support in committee from his fellow Republicans, although Sen. Albert W. Hawkes (R., N. J.) has indicated he would make a fight for it on the floor.

To my surprise, however, Senator Bricker declined to say what his position on the bill was. He said he would make "no prognostications," that he would decide when it came to a matter of voting. In like manner during the weeks-long hearings on the Lilienthal nomination he kept the press guessing as to how he would vote, although at one point he made page one headlines by solemnly averring he had decided Lilienthal was not a Communist.

Asked if his silence on the floor of the Senate in general was a matter of policy, the Senator replied it was not. "When I found it necessary, I did something," he said, grandly impassive.

Harari.

Senator Bricker

"Is it true, Senator, what is generally supposed, that you are close to the NAREB, the National Association of Real Estate Boards?" I asked.

"What do you mean, close to them?" he asked.

"That you reflect their viewpoint."

"I reflect only my own viewpoint. I don't reflect any but my own. And," he added, apparently as an afterthought, "I hope that my viewpoint is reflected by the people of Ohio."

After the November election NAREB launched an all-out campaign to abolish rent control, its executive vice president, Herbert U. Nelson, declaring, "Hell, we're going to wipe out rent control and the whole damn business this time." But it retreated from this viewpoint, adopting a program for "cushioning decontrol" and asking a fifteen percent increase and the decontrol of new housing, when it became clear the Republicans did not want to take the responsibility for abolishing rent control. The House Banking Committee meanwhile reversed a tentative vote for a ten percent increase, delaying final consideration until April 16, after its members had a chance to sound out opinion over the Easter holiday at home.

I ASKED the Senator if he hadn't addressed quite a few gatherings of realtors and home builders' groups. He admitted addressing the national convention of NAREB in Cleveland in 1943, but said it was "just a welcoming address, made in my role of governor." Reminded of another speech (before the Ohio Home Builders Association in November when he was a Senator-elect), he said, yes, he spoke on how government controls

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were handicapping production of houses.

It was at that meeting that, according to press accounts (November 21), Senator Bricker told the Home Builders Association that it is a "constant battle to keep the masses from overthrowing everything we stand for." It was time, he said, for the government to give the home-building industry "back to private enterprise."

"Do you think enough building material controls have been taken off now?" I asked the Senator, and he replied solemnly, "I do not." The committee bill, which will be introduced by Sen. C. Douglass Buck (R., Del.), provides for removing new construction from rent control — which would do away with virtually the only part of the Patman Veterans' Housing Act which still remains in force, and would be saying to veterans, "Yes, you have preference, but only if you have the price the producers could get from the wealthiest competing house-seeker."

But Senator Bricker has an answer to that problem. "Every house that is built gives a home to somebody," he said in mellow tones.

"But not necessarily to the veterans?" I asked.

The Senator was philosophical. "Some might, and some might not" have the price to buy, he said, but those who didn't "have the privilege of renting."

"Do you favor the 'trickle down' theory that is, I believe, advanced by the NAREB, that if high-priced new homes are built, everyone just moves up a notch, and the vets can take the hand-me-downs?"

"You won't have only high-class homes," the Senator said. "And more than the value of a dollar goes into homes. Some cheaper homes can be high class. A home is a lot more than the materials in it." Like what, I wanted to know. "The fact that it's lived in, the people in it," he said, and from the way he said it more than what he said I inferred this was supposed to be a significant remark.

"Are you talking of spiritual values, Senator?"

"Yes, spiritual, and the pride that goes in a home, and strength of citizenship."

He didn't "necessarily support" or "necessarily oppose" Sen. Robert A. Taft in his espousal of the Wagner-Ellender-Taft housing bill on which hearings recently were completed.

"It is said that Senator Taft owns slum properties which may influence his viewpoint on public housing. You don't happen to own any real estate, do you, Senator?"

"I don't know that he does," he said, "and I'm sure I don't. That is the sort of thing which would be said by his enemies."

He denied he had changed his mind on the Lilienthal question. "I didn't make up my mind until the last two days of the hearings," he said, rising to go to the Senate floor.

"Are there any New Dealers that you could trust, Senator?" I asked.

"Oh, there may be some," he said. "Lilienthal is just not competent for the job."

"Is it your feeling—" I began.

"It is not a matter of my feeling. It is a matter of the truth," he said sonorously. "It is not my feeling—it is my judgment on which I must rely." And with that he moved heavily, sedately, toward the door, buttoning with deliberation the double-breasted jacket of his handsomely-tailored gray flannel suit. A male secretary, one of five, smilingly made his adieux for him and propelled him on his way.

It is no accident that the most violent Red-baiters on the Senate Banking Committee are the ones most active in their efforts to scuttle all remaining controls which stand in the way of the profit-hungry producers. The fact that they fear the wrath of veterans and others who are sick of living with in-laws has made them write a clever bill which nevertheless means decontrol.

When I found Senator Buck later in the day, he admitted there was nothing in the bill to prevent the local advisory boards the bill sets up from being composed solely of businessmen and realtors. Sen. John J. Sparkman (D., Ala.) originally proposed tripartite boards which would include labor. But as it appears in the bill, the boards, which may recommend decontrol of rent areas or localities, will be named by the governors of states, with the approval of the Housing Expediter, who also passes on recommendations. The fact that under Frank R. Creedon, named expeditor when the President fired Wilson Wyatt, even the word "veterans" has been dropped from the Veterans' Emergency Housing Program, which is now formally called the Housing Program for 1947, is not without significance. Under Creedon, a former big industrial engineer, nothing is being done, and the program is at a standstill.

"It's a good bill," said Senator Buck gloomily, "if you're going to have to have rent control. I don't believe in control, but personally I feel we should continue it a while longer."

He was a little touchy about the ten percent increase proposal which was omitted from this bill. Apparently the GOP laid an egg there which they wish people would forget. He favored it, he said, but the proposal came from Administrator Philip B. Fleming of the Office of Temporary Controls, now slated for liquidation June 30. It was when Fleming learned the President would have none of it that he cancelled a ten percent increase order which was in the works. Meanwhile the President's new statement asking rent control maintenance—obviously a response to public pressure—has given new hope to the forces backing the Murray-Taylor bill to maintain rent control.

Buck said the committee bill "should satisfy labor completely — except for those who want to keep rent control as is." Asked if that didn't include the entire CIO at least, he admitted with a grunt that the CIO did back the Murray-Taylor bill.

The Senator, a lean, dour individual and a spouse of one of the tribe of Delaware Du Ponts, has never been known for his sensitivity about CIO opinions and desires. On ratifying the Lilienthal nomination, which was urged by the CIO last week, he will support Senator Bricker's proposal that it be sent back to committee and that Lilienthal be investigated by the FBI. "I don't care who investigates him," he said wearily, "but I want it recommitted."

These men, who are so completely dedicated to protecting the interests of the big producers and so anxious to use Red-baiting to cover their own game, are aided by another hatchet man on rent control, Sen. Joseph R. McCarthy (R., Wis.). It was Senator McCarthy who, shortly after he landed in Washington, called a press conference and advised calling out the Army to mine coal.

Sen. Glen Taylor, co-author of the CIO-backed bill and one of the Democrats fighting for approval of Lilienthal, said, "Whereas a year ago the Red-baiters in the Capital would have felt they had to call a man a Communist, now all they think is necessary is to call him a New Dealer. They use the terms synonymously."

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FDR: TWO YEARS AFTER

An Editorial by JOHN STUART

Two years have roared by since Franklin Roosevelt's death. For our country they have been crisis years. But for us and the larger world they have also had the qualities of transition—buoyant, hopeful, cascading with change. The montage of time is never monotonous. The color tones race through the spectrum. And the brighter hues of American life are those, it is now so plain, mixed by Roosevelt in the twelve years of his leadership.

What was it that Roosevelt had in such abundance? What is that makes his memory indelible? The man was complex, infinitely rich and varied in personality. He was radiant in spirit and his gloss was never simply one of official polish. It ran deeper than that and I have tried to define it for myself the better to understand him. I think it was his love of country. Not the tourist kind of love of mountain range, pretty river and green pine. Not the kind of love I once heard expressed by an official of the American Legion. We were standing on the top deck of a steamer two hours before docking in New York. He lifted his hands, looked up and said, "God! There is nothing like an American sky." Roosevelt had none of that scenic chauvinism which so many confuse with love of country.

His love ran to the bottom of the well and it included, above all, the people. He looked upon America as a moral symbol fashioned out of faith in progress and freedom. He put its destiny beyond the counting house and he saw its power as something that would not profit him privately. He possessed the qualities of the ordinary American. His friendliness was enriched with a warm dignity. He scorned sham and many a stuffed shirt left his office with the sawdust streaking the floor. He knew his own mind and although it took innumerable crises and almost endless tinkering with ideas to give him perspective, he finally evolved a social design.

"We are here tonight because we mean to have peace. We are here tonight to state that the Truman Doctrine endangers peace." Thirty thousand New Yorkers who overflowed Madison Square Garden heard Henry Wallace's appeal to all who stood with FDR to resist imperialist adventures abroad and persecution at home.

The design runs in the great stream of Lincoln and Jefferson. It has the same eddies and shallows. And yet because Roosevelt loved his people, was alert to their needs, he was able to win them and to lead them and to take patriotism out of its narrow enclosures and into the wide world. His internationalism emphasized his faith in America. Americans were men—but he knew that not all men were Americans. And because he loved men as creators he did not fear them because they spoke another language or lived outside the national boundaries.

He came to leadership in an era when capitalism could no longer expand. He could not and would not recognize that fact and the source of his blunders and of his errors can be traced to his belief in an economic structure long outmoded. His orientation was, therefore, one of mending and patching. He would save capitalism despite itself. But what is interesting about his belief in capitalism, although there were many capitalists whom he despised, was that he did not fear socialism in the USSR. Between the two systems he had the utmost confidence that capitalism would show itself to be superior. What competition there would be would revolve around a *friendly rivalry* to see which could benefit mankind more.

I do not say that this was the initial motive for his bringing America to an official recognition of the Soviet Union. There were many reasons why he reversed the barren policy of Wilson, of Harding, Coolidge and Hoover. But no one can study the record of American relations with the Russians during the Roosevelt administration—and it is not entirely spotless—without concluding that the thread which ran through his dealings with them was predicated on a friendly rivalry with all differences of opinion and interests open to friendly settlement.

Here was a social design built not alone on the knowledge that we and the Soviet Union represented the two great centers of world power but that it was a design which made peace and progress possible. It is easy to write this but if one projects himself into Roosevelt's background, into the presidency itself with its harrowing pressures, remembers the threatening voices which blared into his ears, the character assassination with which he was constantly menaced —one can get a measure of Roosevelt's greatness. He did not heed the vile epithets, he did not surrender the fundamental truth of our time. The war affirmed the truth that collaboration with the Soviet Union was the highest act of American patriotism and the deepest expression of love of country. Anything else would have meant the end of American civilization. The pretty rivers, the breath-taking mountain ranges would live on if the hordes of the Nazi army won. But would America live? It could not.

And in the same way that Roosevelt believed in a friendly rivalry with the Soviets he also believed in the competition and exchange of ideas within the country. It was

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typical of him to surround himself with varied minds. It was typical of him to draw what he considered the best from them. It was typical of him to have as much respect for the poet and the philosopher as he had for the ward leader and the practical vote-getter. This was the rich spirit who said again and again that it is fear we must fear. His fearlessness made him tolerant and unworried about change. There would be no screening of minds for the only dangerous thoughts were those that blocked progress and looked upon America as a private domain. No doctrine was alien if it enlarged democracy. He challenged those who dragged red herrings across the country. As he said in October 1944, the red herring "was used by Mussolini's Black Shirts and by Hitler's Brown Shirts. It has been used before in this country by the Silver Shirts. . . . But the sound and democratic instincts of the American people rebel against its use, particularly by their own Congressmen—and at the taxpayers' expense."

There are his successors now—wizened, morally sick, fear-ridden men. They do not invoke his name any more and when they do it rings hollow in their mouths. They, on top, have disowned the man who gave their party stature and boldness. They are reduced to making threats and to dancing to the tunes of men whom Roosevelt banished from the White House. Unlike Roosevelt, who grew with his responsibilities, Truman shrinks smaller and smaller with his.

But there are other successors, other heirs to the Roosevelt legacy. His name is invoked and cherished by them for their love of country is identical with his. They count themselves in the millions. Some of them see the river of history more clearly. Some of them think of the Roosevelt tradition as prologue to a newer future, to take America beyond and out of collapse and crisis, crisis and collapse. The millions who clustered around FDR, whatever their differences, had a common belief in the dignity of men. They were his strength—a broad coalition on which he built his many domestic achievements. They and he are indestructible.

LITTLE MAN, BIG LIE

Ex-Senator La Follette adds some more stuffing to the Red bogey and performs public penance for past "sins." Fighting Bob's prodigal son.

By A. B. MAGIL

THESE days a magazine editor who does not provide his readers—or, to be more accurate, his publisher—with an anti-Communist article every so often is regarded as a poor specimen of his profession and is likely to find himself looking for another job. Even so staid and "non-political" a publication as *Harper's*, catering to the intellectual carriage trade, felt it necessary to run two such pieces in a single issue (June, 1946). And not only is the market for this synthetic postwar product expanding, but it is a market in which the worst merchandise is always the best. The manufacturer is in the enviable position of competing with his fellow-manufacturer on the principle that nothing is too foul for the American public. Fortunately for the writers and editors, they have been bequeathed a tactic and a formula to lighten their tasks: the tactic of the political hit-and-run and the formula of the make-the-lie-big-enough-and-some-of-it-will-stick, both described with such ingratiating detail in *Mein Kampf*. This pattern has now become part of the moral coat-of-arms of the ruling dynasties of American capitalist society.

Perhaps a liberal can be found to besmirch and betray the liberal tradition? So much the better. Whatever the brand-name—Schlesinger, Cherne, Birkhead—the product is the same. Recently an even more authoritative name has been added: Robert M. La Follette, Jr. Having crawled (in the customary posture) back into the Republican Party which he left a dozen years ago, and having, nevertheless, been repudiated by the voters, the former US Senator from Wisconsin performs a public act of penance for past sins with an article in *Collier's* (February 8), "Turn the Light on Communism."

La Follette is one of the bright names of twentieth century America. Robert M. La Follette, Sr., Fighting Bob—who does not recall him, even if only as a glowing symbol of democratic insurgence in the dark, dismal, fat years of Harding and Coolidge? Whatever his inconsistencies and the limitations of his middle-class outlook, the elder La Follette fought the trusts, championed the rights of labor, and was one of that lonely Congressional band who voted against entering the imperialist carnage of 1914-18. When La Follette broke with the Republican Party and became the Progressive candidate for President in 1924, he polled the highest vote of any third-party candidate since the Civil War.

There was a time when Bob, Jr., who on his father's death succeeded to his Senate seat, almost seemed like a chip off the old block. His Senate investigation of violations of civil liberties, his joint leadership with his brother Phil of the Progressive Party of Wisconsin, his cooperation with the pre-war New Deal—all this, even if the style was pedestrian, appeared to be the substance of the ideals and objectives of the elder La Follette. But the sons broke with President Roosevelt on foreign policy and began to bundle with all sorts of reactionaries and America Firsters. And they converted the Progressive Party into an anti-Roosevelt vehicle, driving it from defeat to defeat until they finally scrapped it. Then the boys clambered back into the party of the trusts whom their father had fought. And now the payoff: the man who headed a committee which championed civil liberties today echoes the very enemies of democracy whom he exposed. The chip has proved to be only a splinter—the kind that gets under the skin.

What light does La Follette turn on communism? His opening paragraph gives the measure of his objec-

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tivity. "Are we as a nation obligated, in the spirit of freedom," he asks, "to give free license to Communists in their effort to undermine the democratic process? Can we tolerate abuse of our free institutions by those who have no loyalty to them?"

When La Follette undertook his historic Senate inquiry more than a decade ago, he sent investigators into the field to gather evidence and conducted comprehensive hearings at which all sides were heard. Then, on the basis of this data, he prepared reports and drew conclusions which branded various corporations and business organizations as violators of civil liberties and the rights of labor.

But in his latest "investigation" La Follette, substituting the methods of the Rankin Un-American Committee for those of the Civil Liberties Committee, starts with ready-made conclusions and then whips up a hodgepodge of intemperate Red-baiting, distortions and fabrications to support them. Thus the accused is first declared guilty and then a mummery of "evidence" is contrived to make it look legal. Of course, there is nothing original in La Follette's present method. Virtually every anti-Communist diatribe that has emanated from high quarters or from low has rested on the same unproved and disproved *a priori* assumptions that the Communists menace democracy and are disloyal to our free institutions.

THERE is, however, this difference between the former Senator from Wisconsin and most of the other manufacturers of anti-Communist merchandise: he happens to be qualified to speak with authority on efforts "to undermine the democratic process." He spent four years investigating such efforts. The work of those years is embodied in many volumes. I don't know whether La Follette has looked through those volumes lately, but in the light of his present article they contain a striking omission.

Let me ask Mr. La Follette: Why is it that in the four years of your committee's work *it was unable to uncover a single bit of evidence of any act or effort by the Communist Party or individual Communists "to undermine the democratic process"? Do not those volume prove that you lie when you now accuse the Communists of what you formerly accused and convicted the corporations and their hirelings?* And when you now borrow the language of the spies and stool-pigeons who appeared before your committee, of those who, as their testimony showed, used anti-Communism as a screen for anti-democracy and union-busting, are you not serving the same ends and the same interests as they?

Nor does it strengthen your case, Mr. La Follette, when you try to wrap yourself in your father's mantle and to recreate him in your own Red-baiting image. It is true the elder La Follette had differences with the Communists in regard to the 1924 campaign and wrote a letter attacking them. I would not defend the mistakes the Communists may have made then—though the mistakes were by no means all on one side. However, while you quote what your father wrote about the Communists in the heat of campaign controversy, you failed to quote any article or statement by which Robert M. La Follette, Sr., gave aid and comfort to the Red hunt and anti-labor drive of 1919-1920 as you are giving aid and comfort to the Red hunt and anti-labor drive of 1947. You didn't quote it because it doesn't exist!

Furthermore, you are not so naive, Mr. La Follette, as to be unaware that your *Collier's* article feeds the hate-Russia propaganda and facilitates the Dulles-Truman policy of riveting Wall Street domination on other countries. Your father, on the other hand, opposed the Wall Street foreign policy and in the Senate on Jan. 7, 1919, he denounced American military intervention against Soviet Russia. "The great organized wealth of all the established governments of the world," he said, "at this time fears above all things on earth the principles attempted to be established by the Soviet government of Russia." (They were and are *Communist* principles, though the elder La Follette may not have fully appreciated their meaning.) The Russian people, continued Fighting Bob, "so far as we can judge, have organized and are upholding by a great majority the present Soviet government. These facts respecting the Russian people should make anyone hesitate to believe the fantastic tales respecting the present government of Russia."

In fact, by the test implied in the article of Robert M. La Follette, Jr., Robert M. La Follette, Sr., stands convicted of having been a "fellow-traveler"!

NOW let us examine some of the "evidence" presented by Robert the Little. Its quality is hardly flattering to a one-time Senator of the United States. "Communists are watching and waiting—even hoping—for a severe economic depression in the United States," he writes. "They believe a serious slump will advance their objective to discredit and overthrow capitalism and democracy." Of course, here as throughout his article, La Follette reveals he is suffering from a rather prevalent form of political astigmatism: he attributes to the Communists the crimes of the capitalists. Is he really so ignorant—or does he hope his readers are? Everybody knows who it is that's looking forward to what the commercial press has skittishly called a "shakeout." Certainly, La Follette will take the word of Henry Luce's *Life*, which stated in an editorial (Oct. 7, 1946): "Are you prepared for a depression in this country within the next few months? A lot of smart money is. A lot of very hard-headed businessmen are betting on it. Some of them are rather grimly hoping for it, as a 'necessary corrective.'"

When a meteorologist predicts a storm, this doesn't mean he is hoping for it. The Communists, utilizing the tools of Marxist science, predict an economic storm in the very near future—and this time they are not alone in that prediction. But only those whose profit-lust has extinguished every spark of humanity are hoping for a new depression. For the vast majority of Americans, depressions are a catastrophe. Yet for over a hundred years they have been occurring at periodic intervals, an inevitable by-product of that very capitalist system which the Communists want to change. However, far from watching and waiting for the next depression, the Communists are actively seeking to cushion its impact on the people by supporting the fight to bolster mass purchasing power through higher wages and lower prices, by urging extension of social security, by demanding curbs on the trusts, by proposing government ownership of certain key industries and other measures. It is the capitalists who discredit capitalism. It is the money lords and their hunting dogs in both major parties who, like their counterparts in pre-fascist Germany, Italy and Japan, assault democracy and, if unchecked, will eventually overthrow it. It is the

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Communists who, as their record in war and peace, in America and other lands amply demonstrates, most devotedly defend the people's liberties and work for the higher democracy of socialism that will root out the causes of depressions.

La Follette's second charge against the Communists is that they "do not fight fair or in the open. They use the same underground, unscrupulous methods employed by Hitler and Goebbels. All totalitarians, whether of right or left, believe that their own ends justify the use of any means. To obtain their objectives, they resort to the 'big lie' and the 'big smear.' "

Here again there is a case of mistaken identity. It is not the Communists who fight through a millionaire press and radio from which the defenders—though not the enemies—of democracy are virtually excluded. It is not the Communists who employ the poisonous Red-baiting of Hitler and Goebbels to libel and terrorize all who raise their voices against reaction. It is not the Communists who propose legislation that would scuttle, legally or in fact, the Bill of Rights in order to achieve anti-democratic ends. Nor is Wason of the NAM a Communist, nor Eric Johnston, nor Schwellenbach, nor Rankin, nor Thomas (both Norman and J. Parnell), nor Louis Budenz, nor, for that matter, La Follette and Cherne or any of the reactionary and "liberal" practitioners of the "big lie" and the "big smear."

The policies and program of the Communist Party are, as La Follette knows, an open book, available in its press, its official statements and pamphlets. The actual Communist position on any issue is, however, rarely presented in articles purporting to give the lowdown on the Communists because even though the devil can quote scripture, it is nevertheless not easy to make truth buttress falsehood.

RED-BAITING forays begin with Communists, but never end with them. The La Follette article is no exception. "The avowed Communists who acknowledge their affiliations and are out in the open," he says, "are not the most serious menace to democracy. It is the fellow travelers who are difficult to classify." That marvelously elastic term, "fellow traveler"! Whom can it not crucify? Was not Roosevelt considered a fellow traveler by those Liberty Leaguers who were themselves fellow travelers of fascism? Is not every Negro and Jew a fellow traveler (at least) to Rankin? Was not the former chairman of the Senate Civil Liberties Committee himself a fellow traveler to the Girdlers and Pinkertons whose anti-democratic activities he once exposed?

But today the man who formerly turned the light on the foes of democracy is busy turning a very dubious light on its friends: for example, on the most progressive committees of the last Congress, the Pepper Subcommittee on Wartime Health and Education, the Kilgore Subcommittee on War Mobilization, and the Murray Special Committee on Small Business, all of which "had staffs that many Senators believed had been infiltrated by fellow travelers." If Communists or other left-wingers were employed by any of these committees, they had every right to such employment as American citizens who had demonstrated their ability and their loyalty to our nation. Their employment by these committees—if they were employed—only confirms the fact that Communists and their associates are devoted to the people's welfare and are an inseparable part of the progressive forces of the country. When La Follette attacks these committees, while remaining silent about those dominated by reactionaries—about the Un-American Committee, for example, which has hired fascists and anti-Semites—and when he demands a witch-hunt against government employes, he merely confirms the distance he himself has traveled from the progressive path.

Of course, in this squint-eyed view of American political life the Communist tag is broad enough to cover the CIO Political Action Committee. And Robert the Little's acquaintance with truth is slight enough to enable him to malign PAC no less than the Communists. He writes that CIO-PAC "has sponsored the theory that a member of Congress who does not give 100 percent approval to their program should be liquidated and is a fair subject for any sort of a smear campaign. The apparent reason behind the theory is that even if this course of action finally results in the election of a candidate who is opposed to everything they purport to stand for, it is better than electing one who exercises independent judgment."

It is understandable that La Follette should feel piqued that CIO-PAC in Wisconsin, appraising him at his true worth, turned thumbs down on him and declined to further his ambition to become the Republican candidate for United States Senator in the last election. But this cannot alter the fact that the policy which he attributes to CIO-PAC is almost the exact opposite of the policy that organization has actually pursued. Even the casual newspaper reader knows that CIO-PAC, in an effort to establish the widest unity for the defeat of reactionaries, endorsed quite a number of candidates whose records it could not wholly approve. For example, in Ohio it backed former Senator James W.

Huffman against John Bricker even though Huffman had voted for the Case anti-labor bill.

To any informed person it is amusing to find that in the very next paragraph La Follette touches on an election incident, evidently without realizing its implications, in which Red-baiters were guilty of doing the very thing of which he falsely accuses CIO-PAC: Democratic leaders, yielding to the pressure of the Republican Milwaukee *Journal*, which charged the outstanding progressive candidate for Congress, Edward V. Bobrowicz, with being a member of the Communist Party (although he was not), repudiated Bobrowicz and thereby threw the election by a slim margin to the GOP.

Perhaps La Follette expects a pat on the back because, after all, he doesn't go the whole hog. Instead, he garnishes this stale stew from the cookbook of Dies and Rankin with appro-

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priate warnings against suppressing the Communists and curtailing the Bill of Rights. This liberal piety will not deceive genuine liberals. It is like a man deploring the murder which he incites another to commit.

THERE is an established American legal principle that he who comes into court must have clean hands. How clean are La Follette's? A little light on that subject will not be amiss. While fifteen thousand American Communists were risking their lives for their country on various fronts and many thousands more were working day and night on the home front, the senior Senator from Wisconsin was voting repeatedly against measures to strengthen the prosecution of the war and further international cooperation. (Thus, in February, 1944 he voted to end most food subsidies after June 30 and to override the veto of a tax bill which President Roosevelt described as "providing relief not for the needy but for the greedy." On Nov. 5, 1943, though absent from the Senate, he announced himself as joining the five isolationist diehards who voted against the Connally resolution to set up an organization of the United Nations.)

La Follette's isolationist weekly, *The Progressive*, after Pearl Harbor began to talk out of both sides of its mouth. While professing support of the war, it continued to publish article after article by liberal isolationists like Oswald Garrison Villard, Harry Elmer Barnes and Milton Mayer (who once wrote an anti-Semitic piece for the *Saturday Evening Post*), not to mention the contributions of such professional Russia-haters as William Henry Chamberlin and Louis Fischer. It attacked the post-office ban on Charles E. Coughlin's Nazi sheet, *Social Justice*, and the government indictment of the gang of seditionists who were doing Hitler's work. "THIS IS THE ROAD TO FASCISM AT HOME" screamed a front-page headline across an article by the then Senator La Follette in the Sept. 19, 1942 issue, denouncing President Roosevelt's message calling for Congressional action to stabilize the economy and prevent inflation.

Nor did La Follette or his paper, despite their zeal for democracy, find it necessary to turn the light on the Nazi agents directly at their doorsteps who at Lake Geneva, Wis., were publishing *Scribner's Commentator*. It remained for NEW MASSES to expose this outfit in an article by John L. Spivak in its Oct. 14, 1941 issue.

And when brother Phil, after a visit to Germany in 1938, launched with neo-Nazi trappings a short-lived movement called the National Progressives, did this not have the blessing of elder brother Bob?

THE La Follette article is a sad performance. Having squandered the political fortune left him by his father, this prodigal son offers himself at bargain rates to the mob that hounded his father, to the would-be assassins of democracy. But the most terrible war in history has not been fought so that America should repeat the mistakes of Germany, Italy and Japan. It has not been fought so that American liberals should ape the folly of so many German liberals and Social Democrats who sought to save their own necks by leading the lynching bee against the Communists. After Maidanek and Buchenwald do we still need further proof that anti-Communism is cyanide in the national bloodstream? In reaction's alphabet the name Communist Party is also spelled American Federation of Labor, the name Foster is also spelled Lilienthal. That is why even so hardened an opponent of the Communists as President William Green of the AFL finds it necessary to object when the Un-American Committee proposes to dot the i's and cross the t's that he and others like him have left undotted and uncrossed.

Yes, the reactionaries are finding it isn't easy to outlaw the Communist Party because it isn't easy to outlaw the democratic people's movement of which they are flesh and blood. "Communist," said Dr. Frank Kingdon, co-chairman of the Progressive Citizens of America, at a great Madison Square Garden meeting to protest the Dulles-Truman Doctrine, "is the word they use to describe every fighter for liberty who is an effective fighter." And these fighters for liberty are going to make it no less difficult for the empire builders to shackle labor with their savage bills, to betray America with their *anti-Komintern* crusade against the liberty of other nations. We need to stand together for an America rich in freedom, strong in the determination to throw off the tyranny of the money kings—an America that shall be, in Emerson's phrase, "the home of man."

portside patter

By BILL RICHARDS

Earl Bunting, president of the NAM, says that if the upward spiral of prices isn't halted the country will suffer a terrific bust. Patriotic businessmen are urged not to deal with people who insist on paying high prices.

●

US programs to Russia were "sabotaged" and beamed to South America. The State Department is out to get whoever is responsible for this goodwill gesture to the Soviets.

●

It can now be revealed that people study Russian on those rainy nights in Rio.

●

Bilbo will have a new chin and a new set of teeth after his next operation. However, Bilbo isn't being completely remodeled—he still prefers his old seat.

●

King George of Greece died of a cardiac condition. This comes as quite a surprise to all those who didn't believe he had a heart.

●

King Paul is said to be less popular in Greece than his brother was. This represents something of an achievement in itself.

●

Attorney General Clark ranks Truman's stand on Communists with the Monroe Doctrine. Evidently he's busily polishing the red apple.

●

On his recent flight back from Florida President Truman tried out an oxygen mask. Some of his advisors must have made the trip with him.

●

Plans for the UN headquarters call for some buildings of skyscraper proportions. They're making it as difficult as possible for Truman to go over their heads.

●

It is a matter of speculation as to whether the President's investigation of "disloyal" employes will be interpreted against those long-winded Congressmen who bore from within.

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VETERANS OF THE
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
BRIGADE

23 WEST 26th STREET
NEW YORK 10, N. Y.
MUrray Hill 3-5057

April 3, 1947

TO ALL NM READERS:

When you're in a battle, you want everything headquarters can send up. You want your infantry backed by artillery, aircraft, tanks. And we're in a battle now, brother. We need all possible support for our side. We don't want the enemy to pick off any part of our forces. We need them all.

I learned a good deal of that in Spain, although the world knows we had damn little besides men. I learned more of it in World War II. But I want to hark back to Spain a bit for several reasons: first, because that's where I learned most of what I know and this happens to be the anniversary of the Spanish Republic; and second, because I'm talking now about New Masses and I first got to know it in Spain. I know what it meant to me and to most of us who volunteered to defend democracy anywhere in the world so the enemy wouldn't get to our shores.

Right now I want to talk about New Masses because I want New Masses to stay in the battle to save democracy here at home: I know how it fought fascism in Spain, fought it in World War II. I want NM alive and socking away, and I know the enemy is trying to pick it off. I know it is fighting for its life and I'm for its survival. It fought for me in Spain, and afterward, and will so long as it exists. I knew one of its editors who died there, a damn good soldier, Arnold Reid. I knew another of its editors, Alvah Bessie, over there and I know NM people make damn good soldiers on the people's side and the pages reflect that. I think it would be a disaster if New Masses were to go under today. And that's why I'm writing this.

If they pick that magazine off, believe me, all of us who believe in democracy ought to hang our heads in shame. We'd be to blame. You would and I would, and thousands more of us. Yes, I know you've given to one cause and another, but brother, if you haven't shelled out for New Masses, you've fallen down on the job.

I saw boys in Spain reading it before they went into battle, lying there on the ground while the Messerschmitts and Capronis were overhead. I've seen mud-spattered and blood-spattered copies of New Masses worth their weight in gold over there, giving heart and truth to the men who were ready to die for democracy. NM went into battle too.

That's why I'm for it a thousand percent. And I say if you're a good anti-fascist fighter, you'll see to it NM is in there fighting on your side. I'm not appealing to your generosity: I'm appealing to your wisdom.

How about it?

Milton Wolff

Milton Wolff
National Commander

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HOW ABOUT IT?

Milton Wolff says he's appealing to your wisdom. Well, here's the picture:

A little more than two months have passed since we began our financial drive. We told you then NEW MASSES needed $40,000 the first four months to pull through. To date the campaign has netted the magazine $10,491.

In other words, at a little past the half-way mark not much more than one-fourth of the rock-bottom minimum has come in.

That means trouble, dear reader. Grave trouble. It means danger of closing up shop.

To date only one of every fifteeen readers has come through. Those who raise funds for other causes would probably consider this a good response. But NEW MASSES has different standards. We must.

Why has only one reader in fifteen responded to NM's critical situation? We think the principal reason is this: the other fourteen believe the magazine will pull through, one way or another. "It always has," they say to themselves. Yes, it always has because of heroic efforts, because many more put their shoulders to the wheel than have this time.

We know every man and woman among our readers is today involved in many other activities, working hard for many other progressive causes. ***We know it's tough. But believe us, it will be a lot tougher that day the light of NEW MASSES goes out.*** As Vincent Sheean, W. E. B. Du Bois, Katherine Dunham, Dashiell Hammett, Howard Fast, Rep. Vito Marcantonio, John Sloan and other prominent Americans wrote in last week's NM, "there will be cheering and stomping in the back rooms of every reactionary political clique in the country" should that day ever come.

We do not have a corps of fund-raisers to come to you personally and ask you to give. We appeal to you who know and love NEW MASSES to become volunteer fund-raisers for your magazine—to send in your own contributions at once, to get contributions from your friends, to arrange house parties.

We especially ask those who haven't yet contributed to do so immediately, today. Otherwise, the lamp will flicker and die out. And who will be the loser?

THE EDITORS.

HERE'S MY REPLY

to Milton Wolff's appeal:

To NEW MASSES, 104 East 9th Street, New York 3, N. Y.

$.....is enclosed as my initial contribution.

IN ADDITION, I want to pledge $.....so that NM can fully cover its planned budget. (Please indicate date or dates of your pledged donations.)

Pledge Date(s) .....

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... Zone.....

State .....

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BLOOD ON THE COAL

"The crack of doom literally hangs over every miner's head." A report from the coal-fields.

By A. KRCHMAREK

The following report from a coal-mining region, written prior to the Centralia disaster, gives a picture of the conditions which make every mining town a potential Centralia.

Bellaire, O.

TO UNDERSTAND the miners you must see them at work: you must see the fog of coal dust in the mine and swallow it day after day until you get the miners' asthma. You must endure the backbreaking toil, day after day, week after week, without letup. Your body would have to get worn and tired until you would be glad just to get home and lie down and rest up for the next day's work. You would have to feel the aching muscles, the sore back, the tired knees. You would have to have a vision of a lifetime of toil and drudgery before you.

Working under conditions of great danger, the miners face death daily. The crack of doom literally hangs over each man's head. Within one week, five of my friends were crushed by rock falls in three mines. Each year one miner out of every five is killed or injured. If miners were awarded Purple Hearts for their injuries, within five or six years almost every employed coal digger would be boasting a decoration. The slaughter of the miners is a matter that has become taken for granted.

In return for their hazardous labor, for a service so vital to our civilization, the miners are rewarded with living conditions that are the shame of the nation. The mining camps are practically in the same condition they were in fifty years ago. When Pat Toohey, an ex-miner who is a Communist leader, recently visited East Ohio he remarked, "It seems that nothing has changed here except for the worse. The houses are older and more run-down than they were twenty years ago."

The mining camps are the rural counterparts of city slums. The houses are old, lacking modern conveniences. Sanitary facilities are primitive, some camps having open sewers running through them. There are outside pumps—sewage sometimes drains into them—from which the water for every household need has to be carried into the house and heated on coal stoves. Sometimes the camps nestle in beautiful valleys, but they are like ugly festering scars slashed in nature's beauty. The ever-present mountains of burning slag stink up the air and peel the paint off the houses.

Big towns in this region like Steubenville, Wheeling and even Bellaire, where steel and coal merge, swarm with gambling joints, beer joints and houses of prostitution to serve the "cultural needs" of the miners and steel workers. Here they are fleeced quickly, efficiently and thoroughly of their hard-earned wages. In Steubenville, for example, it is impossible to find any kind of a meeting hall—every inch of available space is used for the much more profitable rackets. Every beer joint has its special "rooms."

The political setup in these towns is usually dominated by the "better elements," the finks and the pimps, the gamblers' stooges and the bawdy-house operators. In Wheeling even the federal government could not clean up the red-light district. The Protestant ministers of Steubenville have been waging a crusade for almost a year to clean up the vice conditions. They have been balked by powerful forces in the city and the state administration. Bishop John King Mussio of the Steubenville diocese publicly condemned the anti-vice campaign of the ministers as a "puritanical attitude toward pleasurable occupations" and publicly pledged to fight them. The clergymen replied, "The bishop's statement is such that one might expect it to come from the lips of a Gerald L. K. Smith, but surely not from a bishop of the Roman Catholic Church."

It has now developed that the pillars of the community and the heaviest contributors to the churches have been the vice lords of the city. Beneath the surface, the struggle actually takes on the form of a fight for the spoils of the underworld. The filth, rottenness and decay of the capitalist system is nowhere portrayed in bolder colors than in its treatment of the workers in basic industries, in the steel and mining towns.

EVERY miner dreams about getting away from the mines in much the same way that a small boy dreams of becoming a President of the United States. The odds are pretty much the same. The fact is that the miner is securely chained to his job; very few escape. The technique is simple. Most miners live "on the book," on credit. Even when they are making more money by working the man-killing fifty-four-hour week, the pay envelope never stretches far enough. Payday is the big day: debts are paid, a few items are bought, there is a visit to the larger towns which eagerly await them, and two days later it is back "on the books" again. During periods of unemployment and strikes the debts grow very fast on a mass scale. But the miners invariably pay their old debts; some of them only recently cleaned up their bills from the depression of the Thirties. Thus the whole chain of life in the camps, of living from hand to mouth, from payday to payday, fetters them more securely to their jobs and way of life than physical chains. The isolation of

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the miners from the rest of the working class serves only to promote this tendency.

Nevertheless, individuals desperately seek to escape and to achieve a measure of freedom. Thousands of miners live away from the towns and the camps. They have purchased a few acres of land on some steep and unproductive hillside. They have a few scraggly chickens, maybe a goat or a cow, and try to raise a few vegetables for the table. But even more than escape: they are consciously preparing for the inevitable hard times which every miner knows from experience are bound to come.

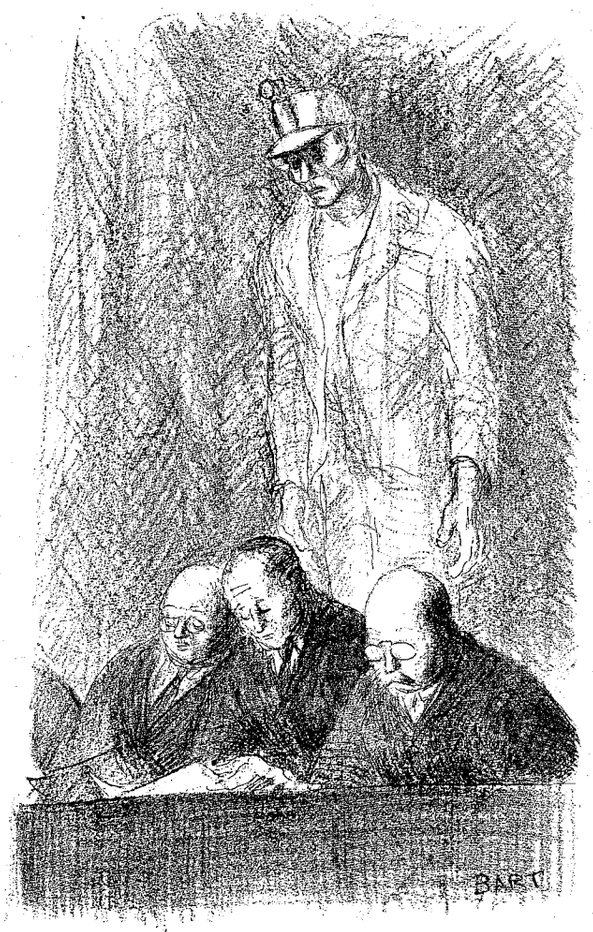
The miners know that they are trapped just as surely as the sixty-six men who perished in the Powhatan, Ohio, mine when they were cut off by a thousand-foot wall of fire in the passage between them and the mine entrance five miles away. For them capitalism does not offer the slightest glimmer of hope—only toil and, then, unemployment.

This is what makes the miners so militant. They hate the operators with a cold fury that freezes the very marrow in the bones of the ruling class. That is why the employers get the support of government injunctions and Supreme Court fines. The miners have only their organized strength, and that of their allies in labor and among the people. But as yet the American public does not know, or realize, the hard, tragic fact of the miners' lot. Time is overdue for all progressives to shout the truth so that all will hear, will understand. And will act.

WHO MURDERED THESE MEN?

THE families of the 111 miners murdered by coal operator rapacity at Centralia, Ill., will continue to grieve long after the mourning period ends. The wives and children of half a million miners in America will, every morning they awake, dread a repetition of the Centralia disaster. The miners themselves know that their blood has saturated our coal, that an average of twenty miners are carried dead out of the earth every week of the year; that at least 64,500 are seriously injured every twelve months, and that the records show every miner has been grievously injured at least twice in the period of 1930 to 1945. Though the public generally has been dimly aware of these tragic facts, it took the Centralia disaster and the week of mourning called by the UMW to focus attention upon them.

Millions are becoming aware of those to blame: in the first place, the greedy coal operators who have consistently sabotaged all laws to safeguard the miners; with them, in the Centralia instance, the collusive Republican officials of Illinois who had more than ample warning of the mine's dangers. (The diggers in this very pit had personally pleaded with every authority up to Governor Green himself to rescue them from the death they knew would inevitably explode upon them some day, unless safety measures were adopted.) And finally, but not least, the negligent federal administration, which was aggressive enough in hounding the miners when they asked for modest economic betterment, and which furiously demanded the imposition of fabulous fines upon their union, libelled them in the eyes of the public and railroaded through an unprecedented Supreme Court decision. Yes, all are to blame: the blood is on the hands of them all.



Actually, the miners' fight for safety has lagged far behind every other aspect of American labor's advancement. Involved in this is the basic fight against the feudal conditions in our mining communities. And here again we encounter the most loathesome qualities of the commercial press which today cooks up indignation against the miners' just aspirations. The publishers association has always played up the "high wages" of our miners, neglecting to tell the public that they are working nine hours a day, six days a week to earn a respectable take-home pay. Yes, the press has carefully avoided discussing any fundamentals about the miners. Truth would expose the criminality of our vaunted profit-system: if the press said A, the readers might say B—namely, that only public ownership in a planned society, *i.e.* socialism, would eradicate this eternal shame upon our nation.

THE EDITORS.

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How Europe Sees It

by WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

Belgrade.

EUROPE has been greatly shocked by President Truman's brutal statement that the United States would furnish men and money to Greece and Turkey "in order to check the spread of communism." Especially was this statement shocking coming as it did on the heels of Truman's remarks a few days before to the effect that the United States valued "free enterprise" more than it did peace. The peoples of Europe, deeply engaged in repairing the terrific damage caused by the war, have not been paying too close attention to the imperialistic expansion of the United States on a world scale. So Truman's jingoistic pronouncements came as a sort of rude awakening.

The explanation for Truman's unprecedented action (by-passing the United Nations) regarding Greece and Turkey is that he is afraid that with the serious weakening of Great Britain in the Mediterranean, as elsewhere, the United States might have its great anti-Soviet air salient in the Near East undermined. It would be a disaster to the designs of American imperialism in this area were Greece to go democratic, as it surely would if Great Britain withdrew its troops. Hence Truman's drastic intervention.

The American anti-Soviet air salient in the Near and Middle East (comprising big military bases in Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Egypt and presumably now also Greece and Turkey) is one of three such air routes that our warmongers are busily building and along which they hope eventually to atom-bomb the Soviet Union. Another of these routes passes through Canada and over the North Pole, and is already highly organized in a military sense. The third great military air salient goes through the captured Japanese Islands—Okinawa, Iwo Jima, etc., which are full of air bases. It is nonsense to speak of these three great airlines as defensive in character. They are fundamentally offensive and are so planned as to enable long-range bombers to reach every vital area of the Soviet Union. It is significant that all three of these air salients by-pass Europe. This indicates that our warmongers, expecting little real assistance from war-torn and war-weary Europe, are figuring on the United States fighting the proposed "preventive" anti-Soviet war principally with its own air forces.

There are at least three basic causes that could tend to impel the warmongers to plunge the United States into an ill-fated war, along the above-mentioned air salients, against the USSR. The first of these would be a failure of the United States to accomplish its imperialist objectives by diplomatic means, by its roughshod atom-bomb diplomacy. In NEW MASSES of January 21, I pointed out how American imperialist foreign policy had been checked, that it had not succeeded in intimidating the Soviet Union, in destroying the new democracies in Europe, in wiping out the Communist armies in China, in checking communism in France, or in fastening new economic and military bonds on the peoples of Latin America. In such a situation, with its imperialist diplomacy (*sic*) failing, there is always the danger that American reaction, rendered desperate, will try to achieve its expansionist ends by a sudden air attack against the USSR over the North Pole, as well as via the Japanese Islands and the Mediterranean air bases.

The second cause that might precipitate American reaction into an anti-Soviet war would be the development of a serious economic crisis in the United States, as many now anticipate. In such an event there would be a strong impulse to find a Hitler solution to the crisis by putting large numbers of the unemployed workers into the Army and to put the factories at munition making, and to head the country in the direction of war.

The third cause that would well make acute the danger of an American war offensive against the Soviet Union would be a victory for reaction in the 1948 elections, one that would give the Republicans the Presidency. This would so strengthen the hands of the ultra-jingoes and would-be world conquerors as to greatly facilitate their efforts at precipitating a war.

Of course, the Wall Street warmakers have not got everything their own way in the United States, not by a long shot. The American people are not the German people. They have behind them a long traditon of democracy and anti-militarism and they have just fought through an anti-fascist war. So they will not allow themselves easily to be led by the nose into an insane atom-bomb war against the USSR. This is to be seen by the present difficulties of the warmongers in their efforts to militarize the American people and to convince them that an anti-Soviet war is both indispensable and inevitable.

The workers and the people generally must be on guard against "war scares" artificially cooked up by reactionaries in various parts of the world in order to serve as a sort of smokescreen behind which they can put across their reactionary domestic programs. At the same time, it is a fact that cannot be ignored when the most powerful bourgeoisie in the world, the capitalists centering in Wall Street, are actively organizing for war. The recent jingoistic speeches and steps by Truman emphasize the seriousness of the situation. Hence the workers and other US democrats should take decisive steps against such insane warmongering.

I AM writing this letter on a train bound from Rome to Trieste, on my way to Belgrade, Yugoslavia. Much of the railroad passes through mountainous country, and it was badly devastated by the retreating Germans. Hundreds of bridges and tunnels were blasted. Stations, shops and switch-tracks, as well as vast numbers of locomotives and cars, were destroyed. Even long stretches of track were torn up. One must actually see the systematic destruction in order to realize it. Since the end of the war the road has been practically rebuilt, a huge work of reconstruction. Even at that, however, for many hours the train crawled along at a snail's pace over jittery new bridges and through tunnels being repaired.

No wonder this whole area is going Communist. At least one-third of the communities of Italy have Communist mayors and Communist majorities in their local councils, including such big centers as Turin, Genoa, Venice, Bologna, Florence and Ferrara. And today I see by the papers that the trade union elections, now taking place, are going about seventy percent Communist.

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THE CULT OF THE PROPER WORD

How current theories of semantics are used to avoid the realities to which language applies.

By MARGARET SCHLAUCH

DOUBLETALK has been a political weapon from ancient times; wherever there is speech (or its substitutes) there is a chance to use ambiguity deliberately in the interests of a group or class. Those playing the game of power politics and aggression have traditionally made use of diplomatic language to conceal thought and mislead rivals. Immediately after the British-American intimidation of the Greek elections, with their concomitants of falsified lists, executions, imprisonments and general terror against militant patriots, President Truman was able, reportedly with a straight face, to tell the newly-arrived ambassador from Rumania that he hoped that country would now hold a "free" election, presumably on the same model. The ambassador, confronted with such amazing verbal usage, and knowing its implications only too well, was obliged to evade the issue politely, and assure our Chief Executive that his is a "regenerated country." Regeneration no doubt means one thing in the White House or the royal palace in Athens, but quite another in Bucharest. The conversation was apparently permitted to end with this graceful semantic evasion.

Reading the daily press has become an onerous job of linguistic interpretation. *Democracy, free enterprise, rights of small nations, satellite, independent country, red fascism, Soviet imperialism*—these are but a few of the terms which cause bewilderment. Small wonder that scientific specialists and lay citizens alike should look to semantics, or the study of meanings, in hope of some guidance toward understanding. Many have thought, and quite honestly so, that our problems would be happily settled if we could get Mr. Truman and the Rumanian ambassador to agree on a definition of "free

What's your real name? You came from France—aren't you an alien? Don't you follow the Tea Party Line? Didn't you say to hell with King George? Didn't you consort with Tom Paine, Tom Jefferson and Patrick Henry?

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election," or Mr. Bevin (or Churchill) and Mr. Molotov on the characteristics of an "independent" as opposed to a "satellite" state. With ardor and sometimes with sincerity these persons say: Stop talking all this nonsense about class struggle, imperialism, exploitation and vested interests. The whole problem is a matter of defining terms. Yet we need only look sharply at one specific instance (such as the so-called "free" Greek election) to know otherwise. The issue is more than mere verbalism.

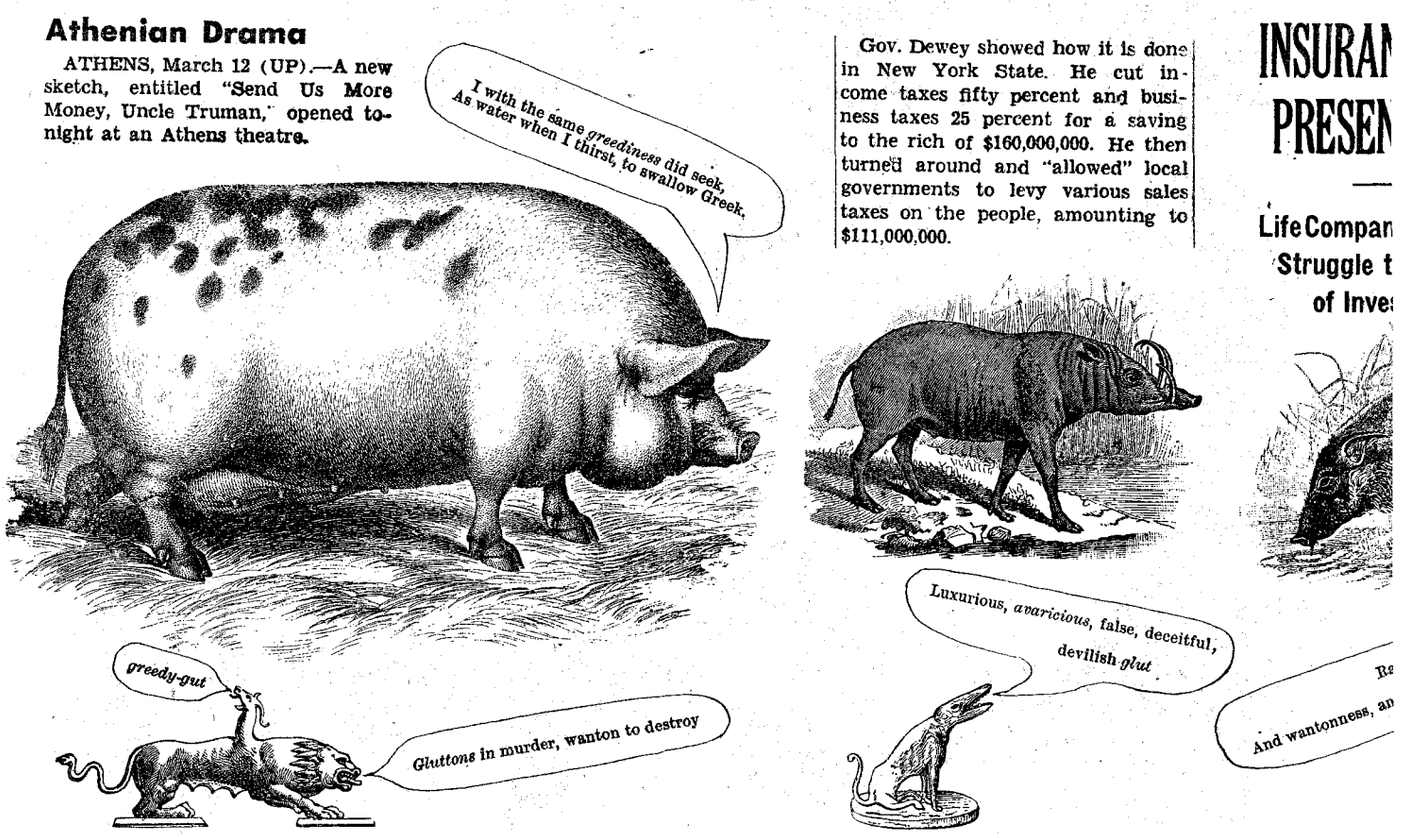
Two chief groups of writers are concerning themselves with problems of meaning. The philosophers have been dealing with what they call semantics in a rather special sense. When Rudolf Carnap writes an *Introduction to Semantics* he is dealing with formal logic, actually: a very special territory of meaning. The logical positivists so employ the term. A second group is the extremely vocal school of Alfred Korzybski, which claims to synthesize all of science into a discipline of semantic study with enormous therapeutic value—a social panacea, no less—for all mankind. The linguists proper, for their part, are concerned chiefly with formal and structural relations within and among languages, and have had comparatively little to say about semantics.

Two recent books may be taken as typical of the two groups dealing with the subject of semantics. The first is a serious study of meaning from a philosophical point of view, by Charles Morris. *Signs, Language and Behavior** undertakes to define linguistic communication behaviorally. The point of departure is the sign, explained in terms of stimulus and response on the level of animal psychology. It is a substitution-stimulus, like the sound of a buzzer replacing the smell of food in evoking behavior directed toward the goal of eating. Signs are thus interpreted by the organism responding to them; the disposition to respond is called an *interpretant*. If, further, one sign is substituted for another, for instance a bell for a buzzer, the substituting sign is called a symbol. From these basic definitions Morris constructs an imposing edifice of logically-related definitions, sharpening the denotations of familiar terms and creating some new ones as well. For instance, a *comsign* is a sign that has the same signification to the organism producing it that it has for the one responding to it. It is to be found among human animals alone. Language is technically called a *lansign-system*, or a set of comsign families, the members of which are restricted in the ways in which they may be combined. Aspects of sign behavior are related to well-known categories in grammar, rhetoric and logic. Even the most abstract elements in the vocabulary of grammar and logic—the connective particles like *if, but, wherefore, since, because*—receive definitions in terms of behavior.

A sociological orientation appears in the latter part of the book. Thus Morris speaks of a social pathology of signs, a state in which individuals' signs resist correction and improvement; and he briefly refers to healthy sign-behavior in a healthy society. He points to important social implications: the extent to which individuals are socially

* Prentice-Hall, Inc. $5.

On Safari With Harari


Athenian Drama
ATHENS, March 12 (UP).—A new sketch, entitled "Send Us More Money, Uncle Truman," opened tonight at an Athens theatre.
I with the same greediness did seek,
As water when I thirst, to swallow Greek.
greedy-gut
Gluttons in murder, wanton to destroy
Gov. Dewey showed how it is done in New York State. He cut income taxes fifty percent and business taxes 25 percent for a saving to the rich of $160,000,000. He then turned around and "allowed" local governments to levy various sales taxes on the people, amounting to $111,000,000.
Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,
devilish glut
INSURAN
PRESEN
Life Compan
Struggle t
of Inve
And wantonness, an

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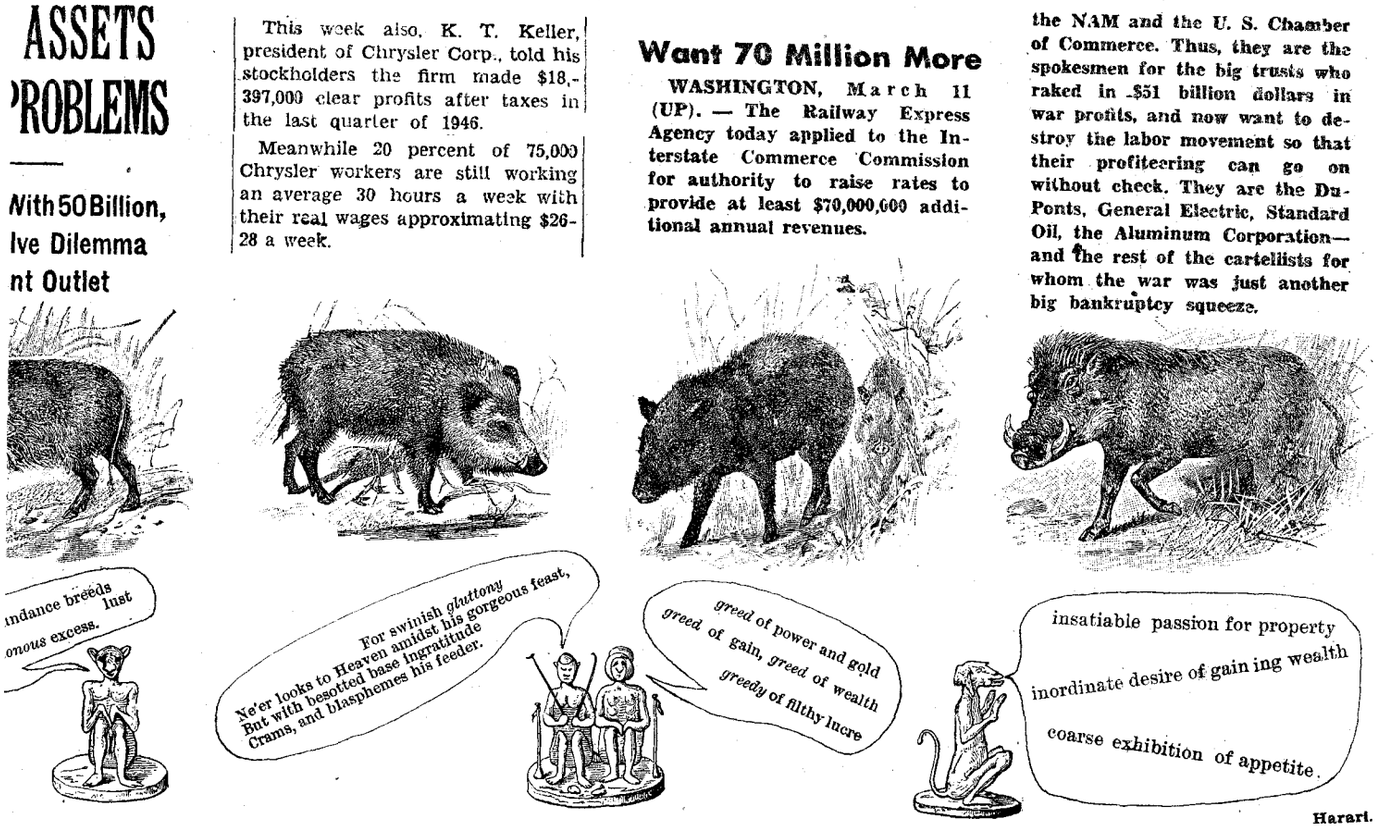
controlled by control of sign processes, and the need for evaluation of socially important types of discourse, such as political propaganda. Acute and honest study of sign behavior (or semiotic) will aid in social adjustments, he says. But he is vividly aware that "a theory of signs cannot itself produce the signs on which social organization must rest" (p. 242). That is to say, he does not try to substitute definitions for social action.

The clarifications made by Morris are welcome. At the same time, an adherent of dialectical materialism will find himself querying and disagreeing at various points. Repeatedly, as Morris initiates a new set of definitions, he takes us back to the dog salivating, under laboratory conditions, in response to a bell or buzzer. He admits that "behavioristicians" tend to shy away from the specific problems of human beings and "turn with relief to rats and cats and dogs and apes" (p. 198); and he criticizes those sociologists who have failed to develop a semiotic adequate to the study of human culture (p. 206). At the same time, he prefaces his description of formators with the exhortation "And so back to the dog!" His account of these abstract logical elements of discourse is based entirely on the conditioned behavior of an animal in a laboratory learning to locate food.

Thus Morris himself takes no account of the levels of phenomena with which scientific discourse deals: the physio-chemical, the psycho-biological, and (for the study of human beings) the social-historical. Recent Marxist discussions of the natural, biological and social sciences have emphasized the fundamental necessity of distinguishing the levels of integration, not trying (for instance) to reduce all biology, with its qualitatively distinct and special characteristics, to the level of physics and chemistry. On the contrary, Morris states at the outset that "the basic terms of semiotic are statable in terms drawn from the biological and physical sciences" (p. 19). For reasons too complicated for summary here, this position is unsatisfactory to a Marxist scientist.

Even in Morris' definitions, admirable as most of them appear, there are certain inadequacies. Nowhere is a clear distinction made between an organism's activity which is a response to a specific stimulus, and identical activity which may not be related to that stimulus. Again, in dealing with what he calls post-language symbols, such as we use in debating with ourselves or composing a poem not intended for another's eye, Morris twice asserts that these are non-social in operation (pp. 37 and 47). Other writers, notably the Soviet linguist Voloshinov, have demonstrated how incomplete is this account: the social factor derived from group experience is effective even in the most private interior monologue. Finally, Morris' discussion of pathic and healthy signs shows a kind of animism since human qualities (health or pathology) are attributed to non-human environment. More guarded formulation would be desirable.

The most appreciative of readers, if he is a Marxist, must point to a basic limitation in the work of writers like Morris and Carnap. It is the absence of regard for dynamics and change. The world of lucid categories, of either-or relationships, of static boundaries, contains no provision for trans-


ASSETS
PROBLEMS
With 50 Billion,
Ive Dilemma
nt Outlet
This week also, K. T. Keller, president of Chrysler Corp., told his stockholders the firm made $18,397,000 clear profits after taxes in the last quarter of 1946.
Meanwhile 20 percent of 75,000 Chrysler workers are still working an average 30 hours a week with their real wages approximating $26-28 a week.
Want 70 Million More
WASHINGTON, March 11 (UP). — The Railway Express Agency today applied to the Interstate Commerce Commission for authority to raise rates to provide at least $70,000,000 additional annual revenues.
the NAM and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce. Thus, they are the spokesmen for the big trusts who raked in $51 billion dollars in war profits, and now want to destroy the labor movement so that their profiteering can go on without check. They are the DuPonts, General Electric, Standard Oil, the Aluminum Corporation—and the rest of the cartellists for whom the war was just another big bankruptcy squeeze.
ındance breeds lust
onous excess.
For swinish gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his feeder.
greed of power and gold
greed of gain, greed of wealth
greedy of filthy lucre
insatiable passion for property
inordinate desire of gain ing wealth
coarse exhibition of appetite
Harari.

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formations and leaps from one category to another. This, it seems to me, is a grave lack. It is the advantage of Marxist materialism that it takes account of change and transmutation. Descriptions of ordinary language (as opposed to the philosophical "metalanguage" of logical positivists) must constantly deal with shifts in all categories. Hence a linguist is perhaps more apt to notice the corresponding omission on the part of philosophers treating semantics as they understand the subject. Nevertheless all students of all sciences can profit by their refined distinctions and definitions.

ON AN entirely different level is the latest volume issuing from the school of Korzybski, which offers a cult of vulgarized semantics as a social panacea. I have elsewhere dealt with the fountain-head of the cult, Korzybski's bulky *Science and Sanity*, and some of the derivative works like Stuart Chase's *Tyranny of Words*. (See *Science and Society*, VI, Fall, 1942.) The current book by Wendell Johnson bears the arresting title: *People in Quandaries: The Semantics of Personal Adjustment.** In our contemporary historical situation, and under our present economic system, an appalling number of persons do unquestionably find themselves in quite dreadful conditions of psychological crisis. Many are desperately seeking escape from their quandaries. They are apt to follow eagerly after any self-proclaimed healer who promises an adjustive cure. If, however, the healer prescribes a mere sedative instead of joint, organized activity directed at the source of our troubles, then he is betraying the trust placed in him. This, it appears to me, is what is done (whether intentionally or not) by Korzybski and his followers.

Their theses, repetitiously stated, are simple in the extreme. Objects must be distinguished from the verbal symbols for them; "the label is not the thing." No two objects are alike; all objects are always changing. Therefore all individual phenomena must be separately named and dated by subscripts. Don't say "international bankers cause wars," but "International Banker A_{1940} caused War B_{1940}." (By 1946 Banker A may be a reformed character!) Beware in general of abstract and collective nouns; try rather to think "extentionally" of groups as made up of individual concrete items. To make language correspond to reality, we must get away from our either-or distinctions, our "two-way" orientation, and recognize gradations and intermediate stages in things and events. If we formulate our objectives in terms of concrete, obtainable goals instead of unrealizable absolutes, we shall be saner and happier.

All this is dressed up by Johnson in pretentious "semantic" verbiage. For instance, affixing a date to a noun is said to preserve the statement involving it from being "Aristotelian." Using hyphens and quotation marks is solemnly proposed as a method of surmounting the rigid Aristotelian laws and categories, which are blamed for the neuroses and psychoses of our civilization. In this connection we find a summary of the main types of psychological aberration, such as is given in any elementary handbook of psychiatry. After belaboring the point that things are really events, since they constantly change, Johnson expounds upon mathematical or statistical graphing, on a high-school level. He creates an apparent relevance for such elementary expositions and anecdotal illustrations by sprinkling the word "semantic" throughout them. Relief from nervous tension is called "semantic relaxation" (p. 230); the calming down of a crying baby when it is held is a "semantic reaction" (p. 233), a psychiatrist is a "semantic catalyzer" (p. 359), and social attitudes surrounding a child are called his "semantic environment" (pp. 405 and 412).

BUT there is more to vulgarized semantics than truisms dressed in pretentious phraseology. If that were all, one could dismiss it as comparatively harmless. Defining one's terms is indeed beneficial exercise. But the promise that the solutions to major ills will come from it is dangerously misleading; when combined with dissuasion from social action it may prove disastrous. The author explicitly warns against social reform; he tells us that all problems are a matter of individual responsibility primarily and should be thus solved. It is a familiar soporific: Don't try coordinated united action toward objective improvements; let each man reform his subjective soul. And in the meantime, coordinated destruction walks the planet unprotested by the soul-reformers—except as individual acts by individual men.

The inherent danger becomes overt in Johnson's section on "Social Reform and Individual Responsibility." "What we call social reform, however," John tells us, "reduces to the behavior of individual human beings responding to specific situations. It is to be considered, for example, that although a few dust-bowl farmers can be removed to better lands *against their own wills*, or at least in spite of their indifference, and a few slums cleared *without any very loud cheering by the tenants directly concerned*, even such undertakings can be carried out only on the personal initiative of some individualists—and such undertakings by themselves leave much, indeed, unsolved." The import of the whole statement, particularly of the phrases I have italicized, is clear: group action is deprecated, being negligible for the solution of personal problems, and unwanted, even resisted, by those immediately affected. Therefore, let each person sit down quietly, by himself, and proceed with the private therapy of defining terms. This will be distinctly peaceful—a "semantic relaxation."

Peaceful — for whom? One can imagine a semanticist in Poland, France, Norway, Greece, or any other country occupied by the Nazis trying to persuade his fellows that united group action was unimportant compared to individual problem-solving. Here, where revolutionary resistance to alien oppression was the only possible constructive therapy, the treacherous effects of the cult would have been clear. $Nazi_1$ was not the same as $Nazi_2$ or $Nazi_3$, to be sure, but more important for the victims was the functioning of all Nazis in a single pattern of destructive, anti-human behavior. In the coming period, with its sharpened imperialist rivalries so dreadfully jeopardizing our efforts toward world peace, there will no doubt be further destructive group actions which must be countered by positive and heroic struggles toward constructive ends. The alternatives are critical as never before in human history. In these times, harkening to the semantic cult is no mere soothing "relaxation"; it is rendering ourselves completely defenseless while we indulge in private games. For this reason I believe the vogue must not be dismissed as another curious but unimportant preoccupation of quasi-intellectuals. It must be clearly revealed as a menace to the constructive social action so sorely needed today, and vigorously opposed.

* Harper. $3.75.

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THE PEOPLE: "NO!"

Letters from readers in the nation's press show a flood of protest against the "Truman Doctrine."

By JOSEPH FOSTER

HARRY TRUMAN made a speech about Greece and Turkey and then beat it for the relatively calm atmosphere of Florida to sit out the public reaction to it. The next day the New York *Times* reported that "President Truman was pleased and gratified by the reaction of the press." The reference, of course, was to that same eighty percent of the press that opposed Roosevelt in his last three election campaigns. Had the President scanned the Letters to the Editor pages across the nation, his smugness might have been somewhat punctured.

Even so, the sentiments of the people so recorded were far from a true reflection of the public's reaction to the presidential proposals, called by a wag "delirium Trumans." To begin with, many large papers in major cities do not publish letters from readers at all, printing instead copious boiler-plate (canned syndicated articles) of Pegler, Winchell, Drew Pearson, Sokolsky, etc., the fulminations of whom are supposed to reflect public opinion. Furthermore, since most papers editorially support the Truman Doctrine, it is normal to expect that they would favor pro-Truman letters and play down or suppress opposition letters. Again, editors have a way of writing lengthy editorials on long-standing community abuses to divert people from more pressing matters. Thus, while the country was agitated over the new disturbing proposals on foreign policy, readers of leading papers in such cities as New Orleans, Houston and Los Angeles were being exhorted to give serious thought to daylight saving, garbage disposal, smog (the smoke and fog from the chimneys of industry), the shooting of pigeons, underground parking, the value of Boy Scouts and the menace of loose dogs. Now, these are all worthy matters and some citizens are so moved by them as to forget all other problems. Letters from such are shrewdly spread over the week, thus giving the impression that the entire community cares not what war drums are being pounded so long as its pigeons are left alone.

But there is sufficient evidence from the national *vox populi* to indicate that a large part of the people would prefer to discuss the running dogs of imperialism, as the Chinese democrats say, to the stray dogs on our cities' streets. What percentage of the total protest the printed letters represent is difficult to say. It is safe to assume that an editor favorable to the Truman idea will print a letter attacking it only after he has received too many similar letters to ignore such sentiment. He will then print one, or maybe two, so as not to antagonize what might be a large group of readers, and at the same time create an impression of "fairness." In all likelihood the letters printed are only a small part of the letters received.

MOST of the objections of people to the President's proposals were that they constituted a blow to the United Nations and that they lead directly to war. Many of the letter-writers also voiced a hatred of the British policy which we were being asked to carry on. One angry Wisconsin reader wanted to know why we didn't make Great Britain relinquish "a twenty-two percent grab of Greek utilities if we were so concerned with the welfare of the Greek people." Another thought $400,000,000 constituted expensive fuel to keep the Anglo-American adventurist pot boiling.

A letter from a resident of Punta Gorda, Fla., published in the Tampa *Times*, is typical of a line of argument that was fairly common: "My, oh, my, it hasn't been so long since we retreated from China . . . at the cost of millions of dollars with the avowed purpose of defeating communism. Must we continue pouring the golden stream of American dollars in an attempt to bail out the staggering nations of Europe . . .?"

It is a commonplace for the powers that be to brand anybody who volubly disagrees with official administrative policy a Red. Yet the vast majority of the letters under discussion are not from Communists, as a brief examination of their contents will show. Take the following couple of paragraphs of a long letter to the Shreveport, La., *Times*. It is written by W. M. Deas, a resident of Arcadia: "We American people are without doubt the most gullible people on earth. Britain tells us that if America will feed and clothe Greece, she will keep her army in Greece to maintain order and preserve the government in its present form. . . . In order to insure our aid, the Red flag of communism is pointed out as a dire threat to America and the world. . . . Swallowing the bait hook, line and sinker, our President gets up and threatens the world with calamity if they refuse to accept American money and military aid. . . ."

Or this one, from Giles Cooper, of Lexington, Ky., who writes to the Louisville *Courier-Journal*: ". . . It is incorrect to say that the threat . . . is the rising tide of communism. The rising tide of nationalism and democracy is the real threat that is sapping the strength of the entire colonial system. But the British with our aid are certainly turning this rising tide of nationalism into the direction of communism by stupidly thwarting it. . . . This kind of thing can but lead to war, ruin and bankruptcy. Then will there be less communism in the world? It seems about time we concerned ourselves less with the difficulties of the British Empire and more with, say, the housing difficulties at home."

It is obvious that the two foregoing examples of resentment against the Truman policy are completely independent of the Communist position, which holds that communism is a positive and healthy solution of the world's ills rather than a negative thing which thrives only on the blunders of the capitalists and disasters of the people.

EXAMINING at random papers from all sections of the country, we see the common cry against war-mongering, of fear of the consequences of our present policy. It is obviously impossible, in this limited space, to touch on more than the merest fraction of these letters. But here are a handful of letters that not only speak for themselves, but for the thousands whose sentiments they represent:

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From the San Francisco *Chronicle*:

To the Editor: We have pledged ourselves more than once not to interfere in the internal affairs of another nation. We did interfere in China and only succeeded in prolonging civil war and in losing the friendship of the Chinese people.

If the Greek regime is so unpopular it will fall without foreign bayonets, let it fall. The President's policy will make us hated by the peoples of Europe, struggling to be free. Taking Britain's place will be a fresh insult to Russia.

If we give the problem to the United Nations we can see to it that all nations are prohibited from interfering.

We have a basis for honest dealing with Russia. She supervised elections in Hungary and the winning party was unfriendly to her. The President said this money for Greece "is an investment in world peace." It is clear to many that it is an investment in World War III.

VALEDA J. BRYANT.

Palo Alto.

From the Chicago *Sun*:

To the Editor: In your splendid editorial on Greece you wrote that the British and Greek troops "are imposing on the Greek people a government which the Greek people do not want—a government which has . . . ruthlessly suppressed civil liberties, packed the police and army with quislings who sold out the people during the German occupation."

Surely this is no democratic and freedom-loving government that we are being asked to support. Isn't it nearer to the truth that in adopting a policy of "stop communism at all costs" we are willing to support even an out-and-out fascist regime?

It is my fervent hope that the people of America will oppose a policy of aid to fascist regimes and heed your warning—"that the attempt to bolster an unpopular government with money carries with it a contingent liability to bolster it with force in the end."

Chicago. JOSEPH EFRIES.

From the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*:

To the Editor: Perhaps we shall all ultimately determine that it is necessary to force democracy upon the various nations of Europe under the guns of our soldiers, an action which we would not tolerate in this country for an instant.

If this is to be our course, then it constitutes a complete reversal of democratic thought in this country and of foreign policy for our nation.

It is not a matter to be brought forth and passed upon in the space of a week. Our people are entitled to have it discussed and considered most carefully. They themselves should be heard. If it will preserve British interests and dominion in the Near East, then she can hold the fort until we have decided what it means to us. Let the President and Congress not hurry and make sure we are not being sold a sorry bill of goods.

ROBERT G. BURNSIDE.

Vandalia, Ill.

Buffalo *News*:

To the Editor: Night after night, Russia and the annexation policy of former enemy countries are torn apart by the editor of *The News* and "Poison Pen" Pegler, etc. It sounds suspiciously like war drums being beaten. . . .

It's too bad the war-mongers never manage to find themselves on the beachhead on which their stupid policies arrange for the young men of the country to die.

A VETERAN OF AFRICA AND EUROPE.

From the Indianapolis *Star*:

To the Editor: American war-mongers have again joined with British, French and Dutch forces. Their ultimate purpose is to destroy British socialism and Russian communism. President Truman's foreign policy will lead to civil war in France, England, Italy, followed by an all-out war with Russia.

C. A. HUBBARD.

Martinsville, Ind.

It is pretty clear, from the above samples, that even without the public hearings and open discussions that have been promised the American people on these issues, many are vocal in opposition. As a citizen in Buffalo and a resident of Bristol, New Hampshire, assert in letters to their papers, a referendum of the people would show widespread objection to the schemes of Truman, Vandenberg, Dulles, Hoover and the economic royalists for whom they speak. The callous disregard of the people's wishes could hardly be called democratic, even by General Marshall.

"THE PROFITEERS," BY YEH CHIEN-YU

Yeh Chien-Yu, now visiting the United States, is one of China's leading cartoonists. During the war he was a leader of the Anti-Japanese Cartoonists' Association. He has had many one-man exhibitions of his work both in China and in India. His first public exhibition in America, which includes many of his wartime drawings, is being shown at the New School for Social Research through April 18.

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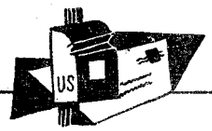

KAY BOYLE CHALLENGES NM REVIEW

To New Masses: Seldom have I read so contrived and prejudiced a piece of writing as Margery Barrett's review, in your magazine, of my collection of *Thirty Stories*. [NM, Dec. 31, 1946.] One misstatement follows another in three columns of print, and because of the nature of Miss Barrett's attack, I must protest not only her distortion of my political beliefs but her disregard of printed fact. Obviously deeply disturbed by what she terms "the sorry spectacle" of the body of my work, Miss Barrett has written a review about an author of whom she apparently knows nothing, and whose stories she did not read with a clear, well-focused eye.

"In each country—Austria, England, France, finally America—the author," writes Miss Barrett, "chameleon-like, assumes the color and contour of its leisure class." Come, come. Fishermen, soldiers, exploited servants, refugees, mountaineers, barmen, shipyard workers, exploited colonial recruits, bus-drivers, school-teachers, deportees are among the people I defend. I cannot think of one story in this book, or in any other book I have written, in which Miss Barrett's "leisure class" does not come off pretty badly. Miss Barrett further states that all my fascisti are "gentlemen." This remark leads me to believe that I take a far dimmer view of the leisure class than does Miss Barrett. I have, at least, devoted a quarter of a century to a detailed exposition, and attack upon, its ruthlessness and its futility.

As for further misinterpretations in Miss Barrett's remarkably obtuse review: "Wedding Day" is no more " a study in incest" than is "The White Horses of Vienna" a condonation of fascism. The latter story presents the heart-breaking position of a professional man of Jewish faith seeking to make his living in the Austrian Tyrol in 1934. A Jewish dentist sent from Vienna to a Tyrolian village in that year would have had a reception similar to that described in my story, and he would have had to find answers to those particular arguments which were given animated life by the marionettes upon the Nazi doctor's stage. The human, inevitable gesture bespeaking man's love for man, which is suggested throughout the story, is made in the final paragraphs and makes clear the fatal, hopeless tragedy—the tragedy of individual impotence in the presence of this organized power which was rapidly, if surreptitiously, gathering strength. (A more lengthy exposition of the emotional pressure employed in the Nazifying of a country may be found in my novel of that same period in Austria, *Death of a Man*. In that book, an Austrian Nazi doctor and a spoiled, neurotic American girl were used as symptoms—rather than symbols—of two national illnesses, one American, one Austrian, of that time. Both maladies were characterized by the high fever of the romantic *revolte*—and I think, in this book, the malignancy of both was manifest.)

"Hardly anyone works" in these stories, says Miss Barrett, "except of course the servants." Does not Miss Barrett consider that making roadbeds (as do the concentration camp prisoners described in the story entitled "Men") is a form of labor? Are not miners, bus-drivers, shipyard workers among the workers of the world? Do not fishermen hauling in their nets, or truck drivers driving their trucks come under the heading of laborers? Does not the building of a mountain chalet by one man who must mount his lumber, cement, and working paraphernalia single-handed to a height constitute a job of work with no white collar involved?

As for the author of *Thirty Stories* shedding no tears, as Miss Barrett states, for "life erased, youth corrupted, labor enslaved, or learning prostituted," can Miss Barrett have indeed remained deaf to the pleas of the interned Spaniards who, over my signature, spoke from the pages of *The Saturday Evening Post* (not *Collier's*, to pick up one more of Miss Barrett's inaccuracies)? Did she not give ear to the interned Poles, Czechs, Austrians, the Negroes and other persecuted peoples who have asked for justice through my stories in the pages of *The New Yorker* or *Harper's Bazaar*? Even though my story "Winter Night" was published in a magazine for which Miss Barrett (like Mr. Truman) could not possibly have any sympathy, could she not hear the sound of the wheels of the deportee trains as they jolted across French soil to their horrible destinations? Was she totally deaf to the voices of the wounded as they lay dying in the ditches of betrayed and panic-stricken France? Or did Miss Barrett choose to dismiss all this that was in print before her and conjure up instead a lady writer in a Hattie Carnegie original serving tea to soldiers? I have never met a lady writer such as she describes. I hope I never shall.

Conceive of the Senegalese as "happy, cruel black children"? Oh, Miss Barrett, for shame, for shame! The Senegalese written of in "They Weren't Going to Die" were men who had not been permitted an education or an *etat civile* because of their color, and yet who, out of the very richness of their ignorance, gave love and loyalty to a mother nation which had no use for them except as "*chair de canon*." To the French count, another member of Miss Barrett's "leisure class," the Senegalese were servants who had had the indecency to get killed in his garden and ruin his strawberry beds. The Germans who killed them understood the count's point of view, and over the bodies of the dead colonial troops, the two gentlemen shook hands. "Defeat," a story to which Miss Barrett also takes exception, spoke similar words of man's outraged loyalty. (The French schoolteacher, in case Miss Barrett skipped that part of the story, was the other side of the medal—the clean, shining side. So was the bus-driver who tells the story.) But why go on?

To one whose books were banned from translation by the Nazi Ministry of Education, and who was attacked on the Vichy radio as "a Communist writer inciting the French to revolution," Miss Barrett's paragraphs seem a willful challenge. "Continue in your indictment of the ordinary individual," a great friend wrote me in 1934, "and in your insistence upon each of us taking the responsibility of being an extraordinary individual." His name was Alexander Berkman. The indictment will continue for those who care to find it there.

Kay Boyle.

New York.

MISS BARRETT REPLIES

Dear Miss Boyle: I am deeply concerned with the indignation that my review of your *Thirty Stories* has aroused in you. It seems to me extremely significant that somewhere along the line rapport between writer and reader has failed so utterly that you believe you wrote the diametrical opposite of what I believe I read.

You feel that I distort your political beliefs and disregard printed fact. I'd like to examine your contentions because I think they involve problems of importance to other writers and other readers as well as to you and me.

First, let's look at some of the "printed fact" that you say I disregard. I'm going to talk about two of the stories, "The White Horses of Vienna" and "Men"; I've chosen these particular pieces because they embody the area of your thinking to which I take exception and because they have been widely read.

In "The White Horses of Vienna" you tell the story of a young Austrian Jew, a student-doctor named Heine, who comes to a Tyrolian village as the temporary assistant to a Nazi doctor. In the course of the story the Nazi puts on a puppet show in which Dollfuss is seen as an inept clown and Hitler as a beautiful grasshopper. At the end of the story the Nazi is taken to

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jail . . . these were the days before Anschluss . . . and Heine grasps his hand and expresses a desire to help him.

Here are some of the words and phrases you use to describe your Nazi: "his tenderness and knowledge"; "his face was as strong as a rock . . . with one side of it given to resolve and the other to compassion"; "All of the places he had been before . . . had never left an evil mark."

Your Jew is largely seen through the eyes of the Nazi's wife, but even when he is not he emerges as servile, effete, possibly pitiful but never respect-worthy.

In the puppet show Dollfuss is an inept clown who pins his faith to a corrupt, institutionalized church. This is fair enough so far as it goes. But how do you describe Hitler, your "great gleaming beauty of a grasshopper?" He is a "fine, green-armored animal, strong and beautifully equipped for the life he had to lead." He speaks in a "compassionate" voice, "as ready for honest anger as it was for gentleness."

Your Nazi wife says: "What about people being hungry, what about this generation of young men who have never had work in their lives because the factories have never opened since the war?" Your Jew: "'Ah, politics, politics again.' cried Dr. Heine . . . wringing his hands like a woman about to cry."

When one attributes to Nazis the personal and public virtues of courage, sturdiness, cleanliness, moral virility and compassion (my God, compassion!) one must be prepared to take the consequences. You have written them as the revolutionary future; you dispose of their opposition as the decadent Jew clinging to the past and the clerico-fascist Dollfuss. History has already reversed your decision.

Your letter mentions "the human, inevitable gesture bespeaking man's love for man"—the culminating incident of the story in which the Jew fumbles about for a way in which to help the Nazi. If we are not to pull darkness about us we must realize that such quixoticism is mere self-indulgence, that a man who abets his destroyer is more than a fool. He is immoral in the deepest sense of the word, because he will destroy not only himself but society.

In your letter you say that for a quarter of a century you have exposed and attacked the leisure class. I do not question your intention, but, believe me, in this volume you have not carried it out. It's true that the working-class people you enumerate (fishermen, soldiers, exploited servants, etc.) move through your pages. But they are almost invariably portrayed as lesser beings. The story "Men" is a case in point.

A group of anti-fascists, prisoners, are building a roadbed in France. The two important characters are an Austrian baron and a Spanish Republican. You paraphrase Dostoevsky's dubious premise that one can know a man from his laugh. Then you tell us that the handsome baron's laugh is "so pure and hearty, so utterly without venom"; the Spaniard, on the other hand, "titters . . . like a vulgar girl."

When the baron encounters a girl he shows that he has what used to be referred to as "the instincts of a gentleman"; he accepts her sympathy and a glass of cognac and leaves her alone. But the Spaniard whistles derisively and gets his face slapped by the baron. The implication that the upper-class attitude toward women is chivalric and the "lower"-class coarse becomes more than offensive when we find that similar distinctions run through the entire group of stories like a leit-motif.

One has the feeling that you experience life as a spectator, viewing the performance from an expensive box seat from which, as any playgoer knows, one sees only obliquely. Not only that—you have taken into the theater with you a good many ideas left over from the fairy-tale matinees of our youth in which the prince and princess are always beautiful, bountiful and good.

You say that I distort your political beliefs. I have no wish to. But I can judge your political beliefs only from what you write. I have no way of knowing the opinions that you express in your own living-room. I think that this is an important point because there is a lesson that many writers have not yet learned. A book stands or falls alone. It must. It's a completely separate voice that reaches many people who will never acquire another scrap of information about the writer. Nothing could be more beside the point than a writer's good intentions, if they are not explicitly expressed.

Given honorable intentions, there can be no dichotomy between a writer's private beliefs and his writing. The writing must be the crystallization of those beliefs. If it isn't then the writer has failed in his primary function of communication. This is not only a failure of craft but of thinking, too. If the writer wishes to be honest with himself it behooves him to reexamine the body of his work and the beliefs that generated it, and find out why they don't square.

It is not important that I believe that in a specific story you have apologized for Nazis and that you, to your credit, are angry with me for saying so. It is only important that as a result of the story Nazis may become more palatable to some readers.

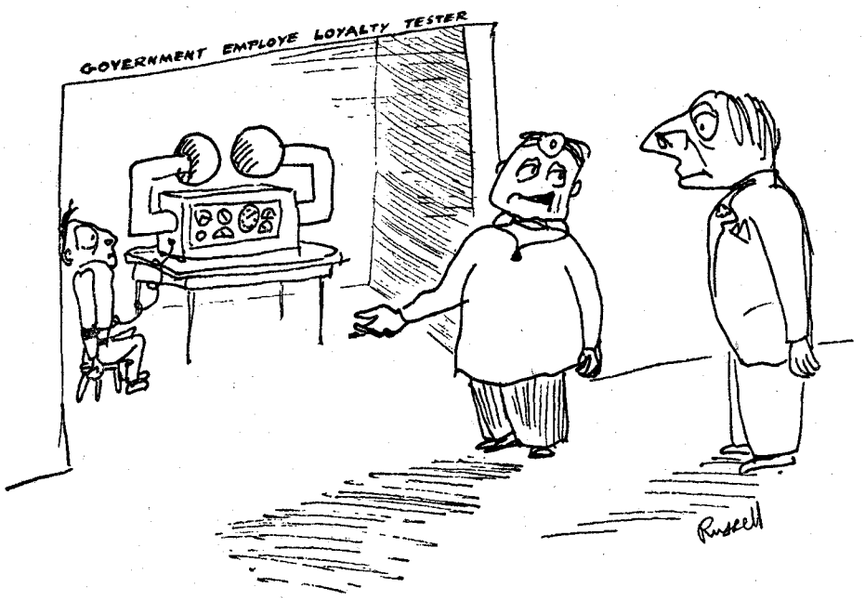
I do not deny your good intentions, Miss Boyle. I do not question your pity. But man is in crisis; he cannot use pity; he demands of the writer justice and, more than that, respect and comprehension.

You quote the romantic anarchist, Alexander Berkman: "Continue in your indictment of the ordinary individual and in your insistence upon each of us taking the responsibility of being an extraordinary individual."

It seems to me that this is a very dangerous credo. Damning the "ordinary" man, the "average citizen," "the masses," "the man in the street"—whatever you want to call him—is but a step from postulating that he doesn't know what's good for him, that he's incapable of governing himself, that it's both charity and wisdom to provide him with a master. Fascism had as one of its philosophic bases the superman, the "extraordinary" individual.

To demand that individuals and societies improve themselves is certainly the function of the writer. But surely to indict men because they behave like men is unrealistic and snobbish. The world is not for extraordinary individuals but for all individuals. If a writer denies this, he is denying the greatest moral concept of our age and delaying the day when the concept will become actuality. He is not functioning for his society, but against it.

New York. MARGERY BARRETT.



". . . and then if any corpuscles show up red, the automatic device hands him a pink slip."

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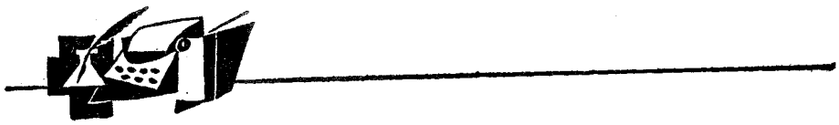
review and comment



A MOUNTAIN OF GRIEVANCE

What the myth of white supremacy has done to our country. Reasons for anger and hope.

By JAMES W. FORD

JIM CROW AMERICA, *by Earl Conrad. Duell, Sloan & Pearce.* $3.

EVERY American should read *Jim Crow America.* Few authors have written so convincingly of the menace of racism, and with such deep feeling, as Earl Conrad. He is an American who believes heart and soul in the equality of the Negro and it shows admirably in his book.

Jim Crow America lays bare the mountain of grievances that has been built up on the myth of white supremacy and it shows how Negro discrimination cuts across every current of American life. The author's account of the venal rape of a Negro woman, Mrs. Recy Taylor, by a white mob in Alabama, is one of the most powerful chapters in his book. Conrad, who investigated this crime first-hand, describes it as one of the most shocking in the recent history of the South. The liberals, he says, fought it. But they abandoned the case because it seemed hopeless in face of Alabama law. Yet between 8,000 and 14,000 Southern crimes have been reported annually to the federal government since 1939. As a typical example of law enforcement, the author writes that "in 1943, only thirty-one investigations were made, and only three cases came to trial." Eugene Gordon, well-known Negro writer who also personally investigated the Recy Taylor case, reported similar findings.

The system of Negro oppression, Conrad writes, "contains many sides, facets, processes, movements, and not until we report on its various tentacles can we get a picture of the octopus called Jim Crow."

There is constant repetition of the bourgeois delineation of Negroes as "esoteric, primitive, brutal, comical." Then there is also the recurrence of the old myth that Negroes are oversexed. Whenever news is scarce the reactionary white press works up a "Negro crime wave." It carries screaming headlines about "Negro muggers" and "rapists." It plays down achievements of the Negro people and labels them lazy, cruel, cowardly and able to absorb democracy or civilization with difficulty if at all.

In its historical analysis, *Jim Crow America* presents two aspects of the labor movement: the fight to combat Negro discrimination and the rise of a new Negro leadership which is joining hands with labor. The trade unions, the author says, have struck at the "divide and rule" practice.

Conrad associates the resurgence of Negro literature with the rise of the labor movement and, conversely, the government's wartime policy of Jim Crow in the Army. He points out that for a long time the policy of white supremacy made Negro-white relations "a dubious or undesirable theme to most publishers and editors."

Since 1820—the author writes—when the Missouri Compromise was passed, "Congressmen both North and South have been bartering Negro lives for one political expediency or another. Is the Negro's relationship to the current alignment in the major parties going to suffer the same guile and patronizing indulgence as in the past?" Negro rights, he says, have always been pivotal in American politics and politicians will ignore them at their own peril.

The book deals with a panorama of attitudes, distrusts and personal stumbling blocks. It covers the whole range of Negro-white relations, including the battle against Jim Crow and its outcome to date. It covers Dewey and Negro discrimination; also "Restrictive Covenants"; "Miscegenation"; "Intermarriage"; the origin of the expression "Jim Crow"; "The African Heritage" and a number of other vital questions.

Conrad succeeds in painting a shocking picture of brutality and oppression. He warns that Jim Crow is a screen behind which American financial magnates and Southern landlords are launching their attack on the democratic liberties of all Americans, but shows that Jim Crow can be smashed if the pro-democratic forces organize to fight it. The author fails, however, to outline sharply the broad democratic forces that were awakened by the war against fascism and to identify clearly the main enemies of democracy. For example, he writes of the "South-West combination to fight 'the corporate aristocracy' of the East." But the crucial line-up of forces in America today is the anti-democratic forces versus the pro-democratic forces. And this line-up extends its influences throughout the country. The pro-democratic forces, including labor, farmers, the Negro people and all patriots, are strong enough to defeat the handful of fanatical imperialists who are driving against democracy at home and toward aggression abroad.

Conrad declares that the keynote of the school of writing typified by Richard Wright and others is "compulsive violence"; that murder, suicide and violence in their characters rid them (the writers) of their own physical compulsions and their books become defensive and offensive blows at the society which oppresses them. The author is in error here. The Wright school falls far short of giving ideological and organizational direction to the struggle. These writers in the main lack a fundamental understanding of the nature of bourgeois society. They lack the clarity of the ideology of the working class movement and of the people's movement against the monopolies. If they were clear on this their writing would be entirely different and more effective. It would reflect organized, disciplined movement rather than anarchistic moods of bewilderment. The Negro people need now more than ever before ideological

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clarity and trained cadres of writers and organizers. Given this strength and confidence the pro-democratic forces have a powerful ally in the Negro people.

But while I do not agree with all of its conclusions, *Jim Crow America*, as a whole, is of tremendous practical and political value. The author has made a powerful contribution to the struggle for democracy in America.

Ex-Powderkeg

EUROPEAN CROSSROAD, *by Ilya Ehrenburg. Knopf.* $2.

THERE was a time when the Balkan states were known as "the powder-keg" of Europe. This was a slogan, but an effective one whose acceptance by the uncritical required no further knowledge on their part. From it there stemmed certain ideas and convictions: that the people of the Balkan states all hated each other, were perennially engaged in various forms of personal and international assault upon each other, and as a result wars were constantly "starting" in the Balkans and invariably spreading elsewhere.

Now the Balkan states are said to be suffering behind "the iron curtain," which is also a slogan whose acceptance by the uncritical requires no more understanding by them than the earlier one.

Yet both slogans have something in common—the abortion of further thinking. If you knew that the Balkans were a "powder-keg" you did not have to know anything further about them—and certainly you did not inquire into what made them a powder-keg or why their peoples were always fighting with each other and spawning wars. If you accept the "fact" that the Balkans now lie behind an "iron curtain," you can of course explain almost everything about them without explaining anything.

Well, Ilya Ehrenburg has been wandering around behind that "iron curtain" (as many another has before him) and he has reported on what has become of the powder-keg. What does Mr. Ehrenburg say? He has been visiting Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Albania and Czechoslovakia since the war ended, and he says this: "Unlike the tourist of old, the traveler today will not find pleasant scenes awaiting him on such a journey, for every stone forces him to reflect and every grave demands an answer. Gloomy souls may be upset because there are too many ruins for one man to absorb in his contemplation. But when I looked at Europe's frightful wounds I saw, behind the rubble, the holocaust and the graves, a new dawn.

"At sunrise it is hard to make out the contours of objects and it is hard to distinguish dawn from dusk. It is up to the observer to know what time it is, historically speaking—dawn or dusk. . . . Noon is the time of harvests, of classical novels and mellow happiness. Today we are living, through the hard, cold twilight of morning; but let us never confuse it with the twilight of evening."

In more specific ways and with endless details Mr. Ehrenburg catalogs the dawn that is breaking over the Balkans. In Albania, in Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, in Rumania—and even in Italy and France—the people learned at first hand the meaning of fascism. They can no longer be deceived by words. You could not convince them that Turkey is a democracy that stands in immediate danger of being dissolved in a sea of "Communist totalitarianism."

No, these people knew their enemies at first hand, both internal and external. The external enemy's military might was smashed, largely by the Red Army; and the internal enemies have been largely disappropriated, exiled, executed or otherwise made harmless—in varying degrees, says Mr. Ehrenburg, but with a general consistency.

This is the "dawn" of which he speaks and which Mr. Truman, Mr. Hearst, Mr. Bullitt and others would like us to believe is impending dusk. In an effort to hold back that dawn, Mr. Truman has asked us to send money and men to Greece and Turkey. It is only a matter of time—if we fail "to distinguish dawn from dusk"—before we will be asked to hold back the dawn throughout the Balkans, and then move eastward ourselves into a very real night.

Mr. Ehrenburg's little book can be used very effectively as source material for those who would like to understand precisely *why* the Balkans used to be called a powder-keg, precisely why today they are said to be suffering behind an "iron curtain." As is usual with this reporter, he states his facts in terms of human beings met on the road, in taverns, offices and factories, on farms and in the fields. And as usual, what he has to say rings with

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the authentic music of a sound bronze bell.

ALVAH BESSIE.

In Black and White

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE, *by Stetson Kennedy. Doubleday, Doran. $3.*

MANY books have been written on Southern aberrations of racism and demagogy, but only a few have hit the core of the South's problem—the economic backwardness which sprouts fascism as dark corners sprout cockroaches. *Southern Exposure* is a new kind of book about the South: it relates cause to effect and it is written from the perspective of a man who knows what he is writing about because he was born in it.

The dust-jacket of the book says that *Southern Exposure* is a documented expose of the anti-democratic forces in the Deep South. The author, by joining various Southern fascist groups under assumed names, gathered the material which shows how deeply fascist ideas have entered into the very marrow of our national life. But superficial exposes of fascist organizations as such are a dime a dozen. Anybody with a cub reporter's intelligence can get hold of enough fascist tracts, get acquainted with enough honky-tonk Hitlers in any city, to rush into print with a sensational but shallow book. On a national scale, the Anti-Defamation League maintains a regular army of investigators and gathers tons of material about "nationalist" organizations, but then negates its own work by refusing to see the dollar behind the swastika and by placing Communists, who pioneered in the exposure of our native Hitlerites, in the same category as fascists.

Southern Exposure avoids the pitfalls of those who stubbornly refuse to see what lies beneath the cancer of fascism. It is free from the sophistry of a John Roy Carlson who still thinks that the raging sea of capitalism can be tamed with words and through "good will" on the part of capitalists. The very chapter titles, "The Squalid South," "Book Larnin, In Black and White," "The 7.7 Democracy of the South," show the author's maturity.

You meet some mighty good men and some mighty sorry men in *Southern Exposure*. You meet characters like Fred Rucker, Alabama representative of Sen. Pappy O'Daniel. You meet C. E. Mills of Jellico, Tenn., president of Free White Americans, Inc. But you also meet magnificent characters like Osceola McKaine, the South Carolina Negro who dared to run for the US Senate to succeed Cotton Ed Smith. You meet others who make you see the promise and hope of a South more progressive than its masters, in these days when the masters are in the precarious position of predatory tomcats perched on a tin roof that buckles under the bright sun of history.

Every progressive Southerner certainly has an obligation to read *Southern Exposure*. But so does every progressive Northerner, since Kennedy shows that the main base of Southern fascism is Northern-controlled monopoly. If the South needs to clean up its backyard, then certainly the North needs to do something about the trash which keeps blowing across the Mason-Dixon line.

RICHARD SHANNON.

Win Or Lose

FINAL JUDGMENT, *by Victor Bernstein. Boni & Gaer. $3.50.*

YEARS ago under the Weimar Republic, the Germans had a magazine as sly as the *New Yorker*, without the latter's snobbishness. Take these verses of a poem by one Karl Kindt. They are from a 1931 issue of *Simplicissimus* (I repeat, *nineteen thirty-one*):

And when we go to war at last,
Just fight and die—you duffer!
For win or lose, the war once past,
Be sure Herr Schacht won't suffer!

When beaten, sore, with crumbling wall,
The wretched Germans flee,
Behind it all, behind it all
Herr Schacht will hide—you'll see!

Victor Bernstein, whose *Final Judgment* is an account and explanation of the Nuremberg trial, learned the prophetic wit of the poem at first hand. He attended the sessions for eleven months, digesting thousands of documents that tell the story of an incredibly bloody conspiracy to set up German "racial" rule over a scientifically ruined world. The book itself is immensely valuable because it brilliantly rescues that story from the sea of documents; it prevents the crime from finding concealment behind the crimes.

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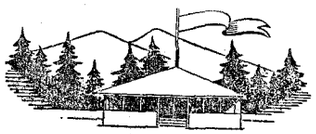

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of Hjalmar Schacht, German big business and finance in person. When Kindt wrote the poem—two years before most of us had heard of Hitler—Schacht was already a leading organizer of the German imperialist conspiracy. From 1931 to the collapse of Germany in 1945, he ranks with Hitler no matter which count of the Nuremberg indictment we consider: crimes against peace; crimes against humanity; war crimes; conspiracy to commit these crimes.

As Bernstein walked out of the Nuremberg courthouse in late October 1946, at the end of the long trial, he bumped into a German policeman. The latter was a former vice-president of the Toymakers' Union. He had spent eight years in a concentration camp and had no fingertips on his right hand. When Bernstein told him Goering and ten others had been sentenced to hang, but three of the defendants had gone free, he asked:

"Please tell me, who are the innocent angels?"

The name Schacht—von Papen and Fritszche were the others—recalled the poem, and its date, to him. It was the first time Bernstein had heard it. If it made him laugh, he forgot to say so in his book.

The story of the deliberate conspiracy—with Schacht's banker friends, the generals and their Social-Democratic allies as principals—to put the Nazis in power, with war as the objective, is covered in Part I of *Final Judgment*.

Part II, "Aggression," recounts the methodical preparation for war on everybody. There was *Case White*, the plan for the destruction of Poland, and *Barbarossa*, the plan for the conquest of the Soviet Union, both of which have their roots in *Mein Kampf*. Accidents of history postponed *Barbarossa* while equally long-prepared plans for war on Belgium, Holland, France, Britain, Yugoslavia, Greece were put into execution. But all the plans were one plan and they added up to the program of Schacht, the Reichswehr, the American and British bankers who financed that kind of Germany.

Part III, "*Todesraum*," concludes the story. It is the story of genocide, the crematoria, the corruption of all things and all men in Germany by active or passive participation in crimes so great they have no popular name. As familiar as this story may seem, it takes on new and horrible life as some piece of testimony or document throws a weird light on life in Naziland.

Take the medical research of Professor W. Blotvogel. The Professor would like to be considered a pure scientist whose work at the Anatomical Institute of the University of Breslau was a humanitarian service to all mankind. But his own report in the *Journal for Microscopic and Anatomical Research* contains this strangely suggestive item:

"Over a rather long period of time, experimental material was gathered from the livers of twenty-four adult healthy persons who died suddenly between five and six o'clock in the morning. Various large pieces of liver were obtained not later than one-half hour after death."

The noble scientist does not say whether he heard the twenty-four rifle shots at dawn each day, but he certainly had to be within hearing to gather all the liver material within a half-hour.

With this fresh in one's mind, it is hard to understand how Schacht could have been acquitted; why British and American authorities are already suppressing similar factual material on the ground that it is no longer desirable to stir "hostility" against Germany; or why Bernstein's own paper, PM, published a Red-baiting faint-praise review of the book. We can only conclude, with Bernstein: "The people will write the final judgment."

GEORGE MARION.

Today's Africa

THE WORLD AND AFRICA, *by W. E. Burghardt Du Bois. Viking.* $3.

As AN adolescent Du Bois was in the habit of writing, for his own guidance, a summation at each birthday of the past year's events and a promise for the coming twelve months. Some sixty years ago young William pledged to himself that he would be "a man worthy of my race and my fathers," that he would labor to help make "the Negro people . . . stand among the honored of the world," and that in fulfilling this "life work," as he already called it, he would dedicate himself to the pursuit of truth.

It is likely that very many young, and still uncorrupted, individuals have said something like this to themselves, but rare it is indeed to find the man of whom one may say that after sixty years of prodigious labors and enormous temptations, the pledge of youth

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had been honored and had borne gratifying fruit. In Dr. Du Bois there walks among us such a one, honored equally by the respect of all decent humanity and by the impotent slanders and attacks of such moral pygmies as the former Secretary of State James Byrnes, and the still-scribbling George Schuyler.

In the work at hand Dr. Du Bois has set himself to show "that the black Africans are men in the same sense as white Europeans and yellow Asiatics, and that history can easily prove this," a task to which he first turned with *The Negro* in 1915 and *Black Folk Then and Now* in 1939. That this still needs doing may be indicated by citing Pearl Buck's introduction to Ojike's recent *My Africa* where she felt obliged to tell the readers that Africa "is not a land of savages and neither is it a wilderness," while Margaret Halsey marred her *Color Blind* by dismissing Africa as one huge jungle which had never and could never produce cultures comparable to those of Europe.

This book traces briefly the existing evidence concerning such great Negro states as Mellestine, Ethiopia, Songhay, Haussa and Bornu, and the very considerable Negro influence in Egypt, the Near East and southern Europe. It treats of the rise of capitalism and the key role that the rape of Africa and the enslavement of the Negro people played in the primitive accumulation of capital, that capital which, as Marx said, came into the world "dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt."

The persistence of this bestiality into our present era is demonstrated in an interpretation explicitly based upon the light provided by Karl Marx, "whom I regard," writes Du Bois, "as the greatest of modern philosophers." And, characteristically, he announces this despite "the witch-hunting which always follows mention of his name." As a consequence not only is the exploitation exposed but there is insistence upon the fact that this exploitation has been militantly resisted by the Negro people of Africa and of America. This is succinctly documented with interesting material dating from the days of slave revolts (though none in the United States is mentioned) to present-day mass organizational activities.

Du Bois' book is an excellent guide to Africa's past and an astute analysis of the interplay of forces between that continent and the rest of the world. If read and used it will help remove a blind spot that afflicts almost all Americans.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

Feeling & Conviction

FAMILY CIRCLE, *by Eve Merriam. Yale University Press.* $2.50.

IN WHAT seems to me one of the best of these poems, "The Coward," Eve Merriam achieves a simple dignity of utterance which enables her to express a kind of feeling very widely shared in our time—and yet one which, though others share it, seems nonetheless her own:

Frightened, you are my only friend.
And frightened, we are everyone.
Someone must take a stand.
Coward, take my coward's hand.

Here, for me at least, she has succeeded in transcending the limits of that private area of feeling where a man's home (or a woman's, in this case) is his castle (or hers). But in transcending them, to enter more public realms

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where feelings are shared, she has carried with her a sense of conviction which contemporary poets only too often lose when they forego their privacy. There are others of Miss Merriam's poems in which she has achieved something of the same effect—a few, for instance, which were included in the group that appeared in *Five Young American Poets, Third Series, 1944,* (such as "It Happens to You Too?") but which, regrettably, I think, she has not chosen to include here.

Miss Merriam's very apt title hints, however, at what is a far more characteristic direction of her work—one stated clearly in the closing lines of the second poem in the book:

O Lord-high
Above all great and public grief
squats private discontent!

The direction is toward the realities of everyday life, which for Miss Merriam are obviously those of the family circle, the petty-bourgeois family circle in an urban setting. To such realities millions of others react with the same "private discontent," and Miss Merriam is quite deft in describing them—as for instance in a little poem called "Rumba" whose jerky rhythms catch the nerve-wracking quality of a typically frustrated white-collar worker's existence:

Stub out ash of day,
Fold evening under arm;
Wind into sheet of night,
Set for alarm-clock light.

As Archibald MacLeish points out in his introduction, she "is capable of the seeming carelessness of eye by which these meanings can be captured. . . . She uses the spoken tongue justly . . . (and she) writes in her own person and not in some borrowed person taken from another."

These are valuable qualities, and one would not want Miss Merriam to lose them in the future. She ought not to as long as she sticks to that very down-to-earth conception of poetry expressed in the personal credo which prefaced her collection in *Five Young American Poets*—a conception embodying two attitudes, that of children who "like poetry because it's fun" and that of "the soldier (and I don't mean 'soldier' only in its literal sense) who turns to poetry because . . . what he is experiencing is so violent, so speeded-up in time, that it must distill into the economy of poetry."

If one asks for something more in later work, perhaps one can best indicate what this something more might be by underlining that word *economy*. The vividness which which Miss Merriam can capture the particularities of experience—and thus make her reader feel as she hopes he will (to quote once more from her credo): "'That's the way I've felt lots of times'"—is her most evident virtue. But this is the kind of virtue, possibly, which can be seen to best advantage when practiced in moderation. For me, it is just when she exercises the greatest restraint—restraint both in the feeling and in the language—as in a poem like "The Coward," that Miss Merriam achieves most successfully "the economy of poetry."

Of course a poet is apt to feel the need of such restraint only if he (or she) aims at somewhat more than merely affording the reader the pleasure of recognition, for which a purely descriptive method is quite adequate. He must want to make the reader feel not as he has, but as he hasn't, felt before—in other words, to deepen his attitude toward reality, not merely to reinforce it. One hopes that Miss Merriam's very clear sense of the real world—and of the urgency of changing it for the better—will persuade her to try for that larger objective.

WALTER MCELROY.

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sights and sounds

STRAIGHT FROM THE HEART

Konstantin Simonov writes a play about people who find that love has not died.

By ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

IN THE generally favorable press received by the Soviet play *The Whole World Over,* by Konstantin Simonov, there was a considerable to-do over the fact that its theme is love and that it delivers no explicit propaganda. From some of the comments one would imagine love to be another American monopoly.

Yes, *The Whole World Over* deals with love—and charmingly and wisely, too. But it deals with it on more levels than the reviewers would have limited it to. It deals with the love for comrades, for humanity and for work, as well as the love between man and woman. It is their interplay that gives the comedy its richness.

Moreover, despite the excessively relieved reviewers, there is a great deal of propaganda in the play, mainly in implications and mainly because of the antics of our press, our Congressional committees and our State Department. Because of them the simple humanities in the play acquire propaganda effects of singular potency.

What will the saber-rattlers, or rather bomb-flippers of our State Department make of this sinister Soviet preoccupation with reconstruction and peace? Here is a play that ends with an "un-American" (according to the Un-American Committee) call for a peaceful world in which peoples can amicably live together, in which the soldier, not the civilian, will be obsolete.

This simple message of a love whose best hopes for fulfillment lie in a peaceful world is given in such warm human terms that even the most ironic of the play's cavillers, Brooks Atkinson, speaks of it as coming "straight from the heart." Will Mr. Atkinson pause to reflect what that might mean in a comparison with most of its American counterparts, which come straight from the spleen?

The central figure in *The Whole World Over* is a professor of architecture, Feodor Vorontsov, an irrepressible old meddler, crotchety and self-willed but also sage and lovable, who intrudes his wisdom, to good effect, upon the lives of his engineer daughter, Olya, her ambitious architect fiance, Sergei—whom she does not love—and a recently discharged engineer, Colonel Savelev, whose apartment has been assigned to the Vorontsovs. Olya falls in love with Savelev at the nagging but inspired instigation of the old man; and Savelev is surprised into love by the same irresistible prods and logic.

Olya had been resigned to marrying her unloved architect in the notion that love had died for her with the still-mourned lover who had been killed in action in the first days of the war. She conceives of marriage as a useful and dutiful benevolence to Sergei, who has persuaded her that he will not prosper properly in his career without her.

The war-hero engineer, similarly, is convinced that love and personal happiness are vanished prospects for him. His wife and child have been killed by the Nazi savages. He projects the remainder of his life as a contribution, through work, to the happiness of the future generation.

Through maintaining a steady and overbearing hand over them through difficulties that would have daunted a lesser meddler, the professor succeeds in convincing the bereaved Olya and her melancholy colonel that grief, beyond a certain point, "becomes a disease." The course of this conviction is influenced by a number of postwar incidentals, principally the housing shortage, out of which Simonov extracts considerable amusement. The essential humor, however, as generally in good comedy, is derived from character and principally from the salty personality of the old professor.

It is the humanity in it that makes the play. Technically it is without much distinction. Its devices are conventional; and its characters run to types, though simpler and warmer representatives of those types than their gagged-up Broadway counterparts. But *The Whole World Over,* sketchy and light though it is, has what is generally more effective than technique: it has feeling, and—something that has become rather rare on the Broadway stage—affection for human beings. That affection, along with a sense of human dignity and a hopeful feeling about man's potentialities for happiness in this world, are very much about and vigorously alive in it.

Unquestionably the finest single contribution to a generally good performance was that of Joseph Buloff as the old professor. Uta Hagen as Olya was attractive, but rather too passive. Stephen Bekassy, as the brooding colonel, was handsome and effectively grave. Among the minor characters Elizabeth Newman as Sascha, the Professor's peasant sister, Lou Polan as the ebullient Colonel Ivanov from Smolensk, Jo Van Fleet as the woman surgeon and George Bartenieff as the boy corporal were all excellent.

In today's theater, with its insistence on speed, to carry comedy action through five scenes without loss of pace is a considerable achievement; but this was only one of the many excellences of Harold Clurman's direction.

Finally, though I have not the original to make a comparison, Thelma Schnee's smooth adaptation handsomely passed the test of performance.

BOBBY-SOXERS crowd the stage door of the Ethel Barrymore Theater where the new movie idol, James Mason, is doing an in-person impersonation of King David. Possibly enough of them will extend their worship to devotions at the box office, to keep his "vehicle" running for a while. Nothing else will. Mason's stage gifts, at least as revealed in the play, *Bathsheba,* amount to nothing more than an agreeable presence.

Nor has the playwright, Jacques Deval, done anything in the play to justify taking an audience's time. There is no new insight into the old

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DON'T LET L. B. DOWN

Hollywood.

AFTER all the recent Hollywood speeches about the film industry's responsibility in contributing to world understanding, MGM is preparing to beat other studios to the tape by offering *The Red Danube*, a viciously anti-Soviet picture.

The Red Danube, it is reported, has as its background postwar Vienna, with Russians and British as leading characters in a strained and explosive situation. The deep-dyed and devilish villains in the plot are, of course, the Soviet personnel, who will probably be played by the most fiendish "heavies" Hollywood can produce.

The story is written by Carey Wilson—the only bright light in the situation since under his scripting it is quite likely that the film will be a dreary and ineffective vehicle for the anti-Soviet propaganda it will contain. Irene Dunne has been mentioned by one Hearst columnist for a leading role, in the first news that leaked out about the film.

MGM has been surrounding the preparation of the film with a secrecy that makes the atom bomb experiments look like public works. It is interesting to conjecture on the hush-hush tactics, though conjecture is hardly necessary. Eric Johnston testified with some pride before the Un-American Committee that Hollywood "may soon produce films showing the evils of communism." It is likely that every major studio in Hollywood has an anti-Soviet and/or anti-labor and/or anti-Communist story that it is considering. MGM is interested, obviously, in getting the first licks and, possibly, the worst licks.

Metro has another reason for wanting silence about its anti-Soviet conspiracy. Hollywood is worried about the box-office these days, troubled about the way ticket buyers are staying away. What would happen if theater owners and MGM itself were deluged in advance with protests from a large section of the population who don't want to see films that will be war-mongering propaganda? Every studio in Hollywood will have an eye on the effects of Metro's "daring experiment." It may be impossible to stop the propaganda mills from grinding out this particular piece of fuel on the fires of world conflict, but enough advance protest will surely make the picture producers think twice before they set out to fill Eric Johnston's fervent pledge.

Every American who wants to keep peace in the world ought to write a letter to Louis B. Mayer at MGM, Culver City, California. That gentleman will be interested to know how you feel about his plans to join in the drum-beating for another war. Don't let L.B. down.

JOHN LONDON.

Bible story of David's and Bathsheba's adultery and David's method of getting the husband out of the way; no use of the old story to link a contemporary with a historic reality; no fresh intensity of feeling about it; nothing, in short, to justify retelling a story so well told in the original.

Perhaps Deval considered it a new insight to turn the ancient sensualist into a modern psychologist, and rationalize sending the husband to his death as a way of sparing the victim the greater agony of discovery. But this did not have weight enough with the author to supply him with the courage of a conviction. The touch of psychological science is overlaid with the smear of mysticism in the prophet Nathan's timely dreams. And when everything is accounted for *Bathsheba*, as a vehicle, has been used to convey only one thing without spilling it—the old standard baggage of sex.

RECORDS

IT IS not necessary at this date to praise the musical greatness of Handel's *Messiah*. It is possible, however, to misunderstand the work. Handel wrote it at a time when he was under attack by the English Tories for his liberal Whig sympathies. At the same time Gay's ribald and folkish *Beggar's Opera* had ridiculed to death the idiocies of early Italian "grand" opera, suited for shallow upper-class entertainment, which had been the prevailing form of musical composition. And so, as a new step forward for his genius, and an answer to the Tories, Handel turned to the oratorio form, creating a magnificent public musical drama—drama in everything but the absence of costume and scenery—in which he carried on Milton's use of religious symbolism for political battle. These works celebrated the victories and affirmation of life of the English middle class. The music is never a mystical flight from the world but is full of strength, a joyous acceptance of the world, a hope for peace. These oratorios became a pillar of England's national music, and originated a tradition of people's choral singing which exists to this day. An example is the Huddersfield Choral Society, made up largely of industrial workers, which conquers the difficulties of the music so magnificently in the present recording.

The conductor is Malcolm Sargent, who avoids pompousness to give the music a lilt and songful pace that I find completely in character. The four soloists are all masters of the Handelian style, with the soprano, Isobel Baillie, and the bass, Norman Walker, especially distinguished in beauty of voice, emotional communication and effortless mastery of every vocal difficulty. The recording is outstanding for clarity and sensuous richness of sound (Columbia M 666).

The small record companies, such as Disc and Keynote, have given themselves the worthy task of exploring the field where the large companies are weakest, that of popular and people's music. It is of the utmost importance to a healthy American musical life to replace the musical nonsense that pours out from the commercial music factories with something meaningful. If carried far enough, a reviewer will thankfully be able to stop talking about "classic" and "popular," and talk only of good music and bad.

The eight songs by Paul Bowles, in "Night Without Sleep," are a real musical contribution. Bowles is a remarkable composer not in any stunning bid he makes for greatness, but in the fact that his songs can fit equally well in a popular music hall and a Town Hall recital. These are good

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songs, translating the popular song idiom into a kind of suspension between major and minor, which he makes the basis for a fresh and really moving vocal line. The excellent singer is Romulo de Spirito (Disc 730). "Folk Music of the Central East," recorded in the USSR, presents an Asiatic music completely different from our own in rhythms, instruments, vocal timbres, sound pitch and every other aspect of what we like to think of as music. The scholar will find it interesting, and a music lover willing to open his ears will find a real beauty within its stridencies (Disc 132). "Creole Songs," excellently sung by Adelaide Van Wey, are charming bits of song, with the happy inclusion of street-vendor cries among the tunes (Disc 629).

Folk songs presented in authentic style always have a note of strangeness, of invention, of complexity in line, which is one of their important musical qualities. By comparison, with the above, the following albums are folk music a step or two removed from the soil. The "New Songs of Palestine," arranged by Prof. A. W. Binder and sung by the International Chorus, have a sameness of sound that I think is not true of the originals. These are splendid songs, however, with a new, buoyant quality which reveals a live culture growing among the Jewish people of Palestine (Keynote 139). "Sabicas" presents an album of brilliantly performed Spanish guitar music, which is in the lighter popular idiom rather than the harsher, more moving flamenco (Keynote 134). Earl Robinson, in "Americana," sings five American folk songs, including "Drill Ye Tarriers," and two of his own songs, "The House I Live In" and "A Man's a Man for A'That," It is a somewhat sweetened and simplified folk music, but these are good songs to hear, and what is more, to sing (Keynote 132). Also tending toward oversweetness are Elie Siegmeister's songs in folk style, "American Legends," sung by his ballad singers. The idea of the album is a fine one, celebrating popular American heroes like Abe Lincoln, Paul Bunyan and John Reed, in poems written by Rosemary Benet, Alfred Kreymborg, Leo Paris and Lewis Allan (Disc 725). It will be a happy day for American music and American democracy when such words and music replace Tin-pan Alley gibberish.

S. FINKELSTEIN.

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